1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

/Jamshedpur/

Introduction

Most Santal are still agriculturists, but some have turned to less time-honored work. The chief industry in which these others are employed is as characteristically modern as the Santal themselves are not. It is the Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO), the largest and oldest modern iron and steel company in India. Since Santal have been employed by TISCO from its founding over fifty years ago, enough time has elapsed for change to become manifest and for the directions of change to become evident.

Jamshedpur, the industrial town which was created to house TISCO, was carved out of the jungle of Singhbhum district, Bihar, in 1908; it owes its location to the rich natural resources of the surrounding area, in which the Santal and other closely related tribes form a substantial part of the population. The population of the city has been drawn from every section of India as well as a number of foreign countries and has grown to more than 218,000. Jamshedpur is extremely atypical compared to other Indian cities—the fact that it is a company town of unprecedented size accounts in large measure for its atypicality. TISCO has from the beginning completely controlled the government of the town, provided housing for most of its workers, operated a school system, and furnished other services. It is a city as much dominated by modern industry as a medieval city was by its cathedral. Traditional institutions, such as temples and socio-political organizations, exist but are weakly developed; the Tata Company, the Tata Workers Union, and the town's competing regional and national political parties are the dominant corporate groups. Caste persists as an institution for regulating marriage, for assigning employment in certain traditionally degrading occupations, and to a certain extent in structuring social interaction. But class in the traditional Western sense is increasingly displacing caste as the

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

121 acts which represent and give recognition to existing social units. But apart from these official boundary markers, and perhaps even more important, are the "shared understandings" and the countless similar behavior patterns and similar material manifestations of behavior which characterize a people.

• 184 773 Among the cultural bonds which pertain to all Santal directly (as opposed to those which are exclusively the property of the various component social units of Santal society) is a myth of creation which comes as close to being an official symbol of unity and a constitution as traditional Santal society has attained. However there are numerous versions of this myth due to the wide dispersion of the Santal, and there are very few Santal who are in possession of more than fragments of a 114 complete version. Culshaw reports that the myth is better known 178 among the older generation and suggests that it is dying out; 773 several ceremonies in which it is normally recited appear to be disappearing in the Bankura District of Bengal where Culshaw gathered his data.[2] Since there are also lengthy accounts of the myth in earlier works,[3] one is tempted to accept the conclusion that knowledge of the myth has declined generally. It must, however, be taken into account that it was formerly the custom to find informants who could elaborate an "authoritative" version of tradition. Also, it is often the case among the Santal, as others, that older men become specialists in ritual knowledge, so that absence of such knowledge among the young may not indicate that the knowledge is disappearing.

773 128 Since numerous accounts and several versions of the myth appear in the literature, only those major themes which are almost always present wherever there are Santal will be reported here.

[2] Culshaw 1949.

[3] Dalton 1872; Bodding 1942, originally 1887.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

197 If the future viability of the myth is open to question, that of the language bond is not. A common language is a bond whose strength can hardly be overestimated; for pervasiveness and necessity no bond can match it. There are dialectical differences, particularly between north and south; a few quite regular sound shifts may cause brief difficulties in communication, and a few words have different meanings or are known only in a particular region. Nevertheless, there is almost complete mutual intelligibility. The Santal themselves are deeply [123] cognizant of language as a basis for intimacy and often indicated to me their desire that I properly learn their language. What little progress I made in this direction was greatly appreciated and always increased the intimacy which the Santal were willing to afford me. The much greater proficiency in Santali that my wife developed allowed her to be more of a Santal than I. As with the origin myth, Santali provides links with the neighboring Mundari-speaking people, though here intelligibility is not always satisfactory.

• 184 This is not the place to chronicle the numerous ceremonies, 776 rituals, ritual paraphernalia, deities, and religious concepts which the Santal hold in common. Apart from those important deities that belong exclusively to the various social units (house, local lineage, village, and the multi-village *Pargana*), there are a series of closely associated deities that belong to all the Santal. 776 These deities are worshiped in a variety of contexts but their 778 special abode is the "Sacred Grove" (*Jaher*), a clump of trees,* lying just beyond each village. The Sacred Grove is particularly the residence of *Marañ Buru*, a kind of "national spirit of

[361] [824] * These trees are left standing during the initial clearing when the village is established. They are largely *Shorea robusta* (*Sarjom*).

776 the Santal" as Culshaw properly describes him.[4] Other "nation-
778 ally" shared deities of the Grove are *Jaherera*, *Liṭa*, *Gōsāe Era*
[192] (Hindi: *Gosain* = pious one), *Mōṛeko* (the Five) and *Tureko* (the Six).[5]

•184 Marañ Buru is regarded as a kind of chief deity, though that
192 honor is sometimes ascribed to Cando (literally "moon," as in
776 Hindi, *chand*) or Siń-Cando (sun-moon) to Ṭhakur, etc. The great variety of names associated almost haphazardly with the notion of "chief" or "biggest" deity is consistent with the acephalous Santal social structure. Nevertheless the Santal do manifest tribal solidarity, and though every house, local lineage, etc., has its own deities, Marañ Buru always receives his portion
[171] of sacrifices, gift offerings and prayer. This constitutes another link between the Santal and other Mundari tribes of the region, who share most of these deities.

114 Sinha has characterized Indian tribals as conceiving of the
181 good life as one with "ample scope for indulgence in pleasure, while maintaining social obligations to corporate group or
[192] groups" (Sinha 1959:309). Culshaw similarly begins his chapter on "Dancing, Music, and Poetry" with the comment that the word "*ṛaṣka* meaning 'pleasure' is often on the lips of the
181 Santal, and it is dear to their hearts."[6] One could hardly begin such a chapter differently, for the traditional sense of the word "pleasure" (*ṛaṣka*) makes it virtually synonymous with dancing

[4] Culshaw, *ibid.*

[5] *Jaherera* is sometimes called *Jaher Budhi* ("Old Lady of the Sacred Grove") and is said to be the consort of Marañ Buru. *Liṭa* is prominent in hunting rites; the rainbow is referred to as the "bow of *Liṭa*." As for the Five and Six, not even the most erudite of the Santal seem to have any knowledge of them other than when they are to receive offerings and prayer.

[6] Culshaw, *ibid.*, 39.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

613 to participate in a prescribed way in this ceremony; in particu-
776 lar they are often asked to become "possessed" (*rum*) and rep-
782 resent either the spirits of the ancestors and/or Maraṅ Buru, the chief deity of the Santal. It is these spirits, representing as they do the unity of the Santal and the local lineage respectively, that must give their approval of the food and other offerings presented to them by the lineage. Non-members thus serve as properly objective outsiders in making this judgment, even though it is done in a state of "possession" in which they are the vehicles of the deity and spirits. It is interesting that these outsiders are frequently mother's brothers or other relatives of a woman married into the lineage; in this way the affinal connections of the local lineage are also given recognition in this ceremony.

The expressions of the Santal regarding this rite indicate that feelings of strength and bravery within the solidary lineage are closely associated with the rites performed. As one Santal put it, "Field worship is of hero Gods; by worshipping them, courage and bravery are gained by the members of the sub-lineage." Another Santal added, "Nowadays there is no warfare, but these deities are true as anything"; a third then related a famous tale of two Santal heroes who were of his sub-clan.

764 "Field worship" is inextricably intertwined with certain
[192] funerary rites (*bhaṇḍan*; Hindi: *Bhāṇḍa* = an earthen vessel)
[782] which are prerequisites for both "field worship" and marriage
[613] rites. Representatives of the local lineage must perform the *bhaṇḍan* after the death of any member. Among the northern
[484] Santal these rites are generally performed at the Damodar
[184] River; some of the southern Santal also journey to the Damodar

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

184 764 [484] but others perform the rites at less distant streams. The fact that the southern Santal often journey northward to the Damodar for funerary purposes suggests that many of them might have come from this region southward, bringing the tradition of the sacred Damodar with them. It is possible that this voyaging is either the result of recent contact with the northern Santal or consultation with the ethnographic literature about them; however, this seems unlikely since there is no particular reason why they should have chosen to borrow such an inconvenient practice from their northern co-tribals. Formerly the [178] southern Santal deposited certain bones of the deceased at the river after performing various rites at some Hindu cremation grounds on the bank of the river. Today, a few coins are deposited in lieu of bones.*

613 764 769 Before the voyage to the river, members of the local lineage, together with their wives and other affinal relatives and fellow villagers of the deceased, join in rites performed within the deceased's village. However, the local lineage is responsible for supplying to the spirit of the deceased the offerings which must be accepted by his spirit as manifested in a medium. The considerable cost involved in supplying these offerings is not totally lost, since the local lineage customarily sells these offerings after returning from the river. The arrangements for this procedure represent a compromise which reveals the antagonism between solidarity and the higgling and haggling of the market. It is required that the items offered be exchanged at far less than their cost, that there be no bargaining, and that members of the local lineage, and in principle even fellow clan

* For a relatively complete account of funerary rites, see Culshaw 1949: Chap. 12.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

any, and then begins to prepare a meal. Within the local lineage these visits are frequent, especially during festivals.

Rice and money are borrowed—always without interest—within the local lineage, though there are cases in which help is denied. Occasionally members may contribute funds so that a young member may obtain an education; however, prior to this century education was extremely rare among the southern Santal, among whom missionary efforts were not nearly so intense as among the northern Santal.

Though an entire local lineage is not likely to reside in a single village, the members inevitably live near one another. Typically, the founders of a village are members of a single local lineage. Members of this founding lineage thus tend to have more and superior land than later immigrants. In most instances the chief offices of the village, i.e., "village headman" and "village priest" belong to the founding lineage. The rule of primogeniture obtains, though upon the death of any officer the villagers must accede in the choice of a new officer. To what degree the villagers may in fact determine who shall fill the position is not clear, though there are cases in which an older son of a deceased headman or priest was passed over in favor of a younger son on the basis of alleged incompetence. Although the village must give its assent in selecting leaders—and to the decisions of leaders as well, since there is nothing more than the consent of the governed to support such decisions—important control of village affairs does lie within the control of the founding local lineage through its control of offices, superior wealth, and prestige.

In the traditional system, disputes within a village are brought to the attention of the headman by the contending parties. He may suggest some compromise if it is not a question

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

622 the approval of the villagers with whom he is associated; he
628 presides generally at disputes which cannot be settled within
692 a particular village, at inter-village disputes or at discussions of custom which are of concern to the entire set of villages under his jurisdiction; like the headman of a village, he is at most *primus inter pares*. Publicly he is little more than the voice of consensus, though privately his influence is that of an especially respected and powerful person.

69 The "justice" of the Santal, i.e., their institutionalized prac-
[577] tices as distinct from the desires of injured parties, places a strong premium on rendering decisions which will restore severed relationships and permit life to return to what it was
[681] before the dispute. The fee to the "court" is often as substantial as a judgment and must be paid by both parties. There is almost always encouragement to settle "out of court" by friends and officials. Fees paid to the "court" are generally spent to buy rice beer and viands so that after the bitterness of the contest both court and contestants join together in "pleasure," and all
[192] is as it was. These gatherings to settle disputes within the village are usually called "discussions" (*galmarao*); multi-village gatherings are known as *dorbar* (Hindi, *dorbar* = court).

584 Besides the judicial tie, each village is bound to a number of
621 others by marriage. Marriage procedures will be discussed at length but it is appropriate here to note that marriage is arranged with the aid of villagers and village officials as well as those associated by kinship and is of great interest and concern to the whole village. The ceremonies of marriage dramatize this concern, reflecting village solidarity in gaining and accepting a daughter or sorrowfully giving one up, as the case may be.

63 Beyond the multi-village judicial organization there are no
184 formally organized territorial units: however, regional cultural

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

63
184 variation and specialization do exist even though there are few sharp boundary lines. There is one regular social event
224 which reflects and intensifies regional cultural and social inter-
628 connection; this event is an annual hunt followed by a large all-male gathering outside some village where performances largely humorous and/or "obscene" (in their eyes as well as mine) take place. The participants consist of teams generally from several villages within a vicinity, and they compete with other similarly constituted teams for the favor of the assembled
[273] throng. Like many such gatherings, it terminates with rice beer.

In most of the territory occupied by the southern Santal, game is so scarce that the hunting aspect of this yearly event has become *pro forma*. After the hunt and its rituals, the various teams proceed in a march-dance parade through different villages as they make their way toward the final gathering place
[534] where performances will be held. Vigorous drum-beating marks
[535] the progress of their procession, and the characteristic Santal male strutting in dance is particularly pronounced. Any game
[192] that has been shot is borne aloft on pole stretchers. The entire event is known as *Sendra*.

[692] Several of my informants as well as the literature maintain that serious discussions of Santal customs and even settling of disputes that have escaped solution within the judicial units occur after the hunt. This was not the case at the one *Sendra* I attended. However this may be, the *Sendra* remains the largest and territorially the widest gathering of Santal, sometimes bringing together more than a thousand Santal living within a radius of about fifty miles.

596 Still to be considered are the intertwined components of the
592 extended and nuclear family. The term "extended family" is unfortunately one which has often been used very loosely; it

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

Although the Santal used to do some weaving and pottery-making, they have traditionally obtained almost everything except foodstuffs and a few forest products from neighboring tribal or Hindu peoples. Even the drums and the flutes which are so integrated in the "pleasure" complex are invariably purchased from Hindu specialists. Furthermore, elite borrowings have often become "naturalized," i.e., accepted as Santal and then widely adopted so as to close the gap. Nevertheless, emulation of Hindus did not always go unnoticed and it will be recalled that there is evidence of resistance to such Hinduization.

The many Hindu cognates in this text give some indication of the extent of linguistic borrowing. Only a few Santal kin terms are of non-Indo-European origin, and the system of dyadic relations among kin is very much like that of the Hindus; one of the largest clans, Hansdak', has a name clearly of Indo-European origin (*hans* = duck in Santali and Hindi), but one also notes the syncretism with the non-Indo-European (*dak'* = water in Santali). Even parts of the Rāmāyaṇa are sung in Santali and on occasion the Santal are allowed to enter the tale. Considering the prevalence of "parochialization" and "universalization" in India,[20] it is possible that some of what is common to the two cultures is of Santal origin. But the heavy incorporation of vocabulary clearly of Indo-European origin suggests that the flow was largely from the Hindus to the Santal.

Prior to industrial employment in this century a small cultural gap separated the elite and common Santal. Though there was some differential emulation of Hinduism it was largely of isolated traits which often became naturalized, and the basic "pleasure" orientation of the Santal was hardly altered.

[20] Marriott 1955:211.

[P. 44 is blank]

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 554 871 181 house, he is like a *Diku*; before him I feel like a black Santal." I have heard other Santal remark that they could not sing or talk freely before a certain educated Santal who was a village leader because his bearing made them ill at ease. It seems particularly difficult to carry on the normal "pleasure" activities such as dancing, singing, drinking, and even convivial conversation, before such august Santal. The same gap seen from the vantage point of the educated is expressed in the following remarks of an educated woman:

> I am happy now to be living in the city because both my child and I were sick from "envy" [i.e., being "envied" by others] when we lived in the *bustee*; all are healthy here. I never danced or sang in the village though I liked to watch; my mother and sister danced but I didn't. When very young I did, but after I started going to school, I didn't. Some don't send their children to school because others will have "envy" and say that highly educated girls will be outcasted for marrying into other castes; that is not true. Why shouldn't we study as high as money allows? *Diku* girls do.

[192] Less eloquent educated Santal simply explain matters by saying that they have become "embarrassed" (*lajao*) to dance, sing, etc.

177 871 If differential Hinduization is the major component of the gap created by education, it is not the only component. An additional divisive effect of education is that it gives the student a secular orientation which is highly differentiating but of limited effect since only those with college educations acquire it thoroughly. There are various manifestations of this orientation, but a particularly interesting example which I have discussed elsewhere[1] concerns differences in beliefs about witch-

177 754 871 184

[1] Orans 1959.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

craft in village, *bustee*, and city. There is increasing secularization of witchcraft belief from village to city, with the *bustee* occupying something of an intermediate position. Among the *bustee* Santal, some are skeptical about the existence of witches, or at least claim to be; I reported such remarks as "Yes, I have seen lights from what are said to be witches, but who knows if they really were? I have never seen a witch myself although others say that they have. Since I have not seen for myself, how can I say whether or not they exist?" Many city Santal argued that witchcraft was not properly speaking a supernatural phenomenon at all but a kind of magical technique, only seemingly supernatural, and referred to it appropriately enough as "mesmerism." A few city Santal positively denied the existence of witchcraft, calling it a superstition of the "ignorant." One student in the Jamshedpur Cooperative College gave a totally naturalistic explanation. In the course of his studies he had read a psychology book which said that people frequently imagine that they see things that they are very much afraid of. He accepted this as a convincing explanation of witchcraft congenial to his acquired secular outlook.

In an earlier interpretation of these differences in belief I gave too much credit to mere residence in the environs of Jamshedpur and the cultural contacts it entailed. Later in my field work I encountered views among the highly educated villagers which were not different than those of the city Santal. I did note, even at the time, that there were no signs of such secularism among the father or the Santal neighbors of the Jamshedpur Cooperative College student mentioned above; indeed, these uneducated Santal found the psychological explanation quite unconvincing. Examination of background material

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 754 871 184 on those city Santal having a secular view of witchcraft indicates that almost all were exceptionally well-educated. The differences between village, *bustee*, and city Santal in witchcraft belief are statistical, reflecting the differences in education between the members of these three kinds of communities.

184 556 871 Increased education is significant for the solidarity of the Santal since it is not equally distributed among them. Generally, it widens the gap between the Santal who are already wealthier and occupy prestigeful hereditary positions and the mass of Santal without wealth or position. This differential distribution of education results from its cost; there are the direct expenses for tuition and books and living expenses away from home, plus the sacrifice of labor which farm families in particular must make in sending their children to school. The cultural gap [754] furthers the social gap. As indicated, the educated and traditional elite are "envied" and fearful of "envy"; in spite of the secular explanations given of witchcraft, many Santal working and living in Jamshedpur are reluctant to return to their villages for fear of witchcraft and the "envy" which is held to motivate it. The same fear prompts the powerful and wealthy who have children attending school to keep those children out of their native village, lest their presence arouse "envy."

177 184 871 Besides straining internal relations by accentuating divisive tendencies already present, by increasing Hinduization education reduces the differences between Santal and Hindu and thereby threatens the external aspect of solidarity. The very orientation and practices which served so well to separate the Santal from the Hindu are simultaneously the attributes of low status in the prevailing system of caste ranking. To maintain these practices which serve solidarity so well is to forego the

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177
184
871

opportunities of rank improvement through emulation of high Hindu practices. To abandon these practices is to weaken solidarity. The ambivalence which this situation arouses, and which continually manifests itself in the course of Santal-Hindu relations, shall be referred to as the "emulation-solidarity conflict." Increased education resulting from industrial development and employment may then be said to have increased emulation of Hinduism and decreased Santal solidarity.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

121 tribal peoples has been most marked, special circumstances attend the disruptions. In most of Africa, money wages and industrial work have been accompanied by the separation of the wage worker from his village, with his consequent removal from the sanctions and social controls of the tribal society."[2]

121 177 166 The pronounced cultural and social changes observed among the Santal should add to the evidence indicating the significance of migration. In addition the microscopic form of anthropological inquiry used with the Santal reveals something more of the *modus operandi* of migration to industrial employment than can be seen at the macroscopic level at which Weber operated.

Traditional Marriage Forms

177 184 583 The Santal have a number of legitimate or quasi-legitimate forms of marriage. It is the manner in which a marriage is contracted, i.e., whether or not it is arranged, and the way in which it is celebrated, which define the form. The various forms are graded by cost and elaboration of the ceremonies performed, and differ significantly in the ceremonial content. There are relatively few arranged marriages among Santal industrial workers living in *bustees* as compared to those among the Santal living in their traditional native villages. The results of my research into this difference indicate that it is the result of migration to industrial employment, that the shift to unarranged marriages among the workers is the result of weakened bonds with both kin and villages, and finally that this is the result of neither migration nor industrial employment singly, but rather of the two together.

583 192 177 The marriage form with the highest prestige and involving the greatest expenditure is known as *duar itut' sindur* ("placing

[2] Nash 1958:113.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

583 riage is fixed at two cows if the bride's father is living, and one if he is dead. Additional payments made by the groom's guardians include the presentation of dhotis to the bride's guardians and to a number of her co-villagers; the cost of these gifts is not fixed but will be greater in a *DB* than in any other form of marriage. The really heavy costs, however, stem from the necessity of transporting and feeding the large party which accompanies the groom's party to the bride's village, hiring the palanquin-bearers or taxi, as the case may be, and providing rice beer for all one's own villagers as well as food for many visitors and relatives from other villages. In a *DB* the groom's guardians may invite a few Hindu acquaintances, whose presence would enhance their Santal host's prestige. Hindus are seldom invited to other forms except occasionally to the second highest form. The total cost of a *DB* in 1957 was Rs. 800–1,500, or, at the going price for rice, 3,200–6,000 lbs.

177 That the highest, most expensive, and socially most exclusive
• 184 form (*DB*) tends to be practiced only by the elite Santal, who
583 are also the most Hinduized, is a reflection of the greater acculturation of the elite; it also reflects the general concession of rank to the Hindus, since all Santal regard the *DB* as the highest form.

583 The second most expensive and prestigeful form of marriage
[192] ceremony is the *saṅge bariat* (*saṅge* = many; *bariat* = groom's party; Hindi: *barat* = groom's party). *SB* suggests by its name that like the *DB* it is an arranged marriage involving important and numerous people who accompany the groom to the village of the bride. In bride-price and other gifts and exchanges, it requires about the same expenditure as a *DB*; but since the number of people invited to partake of food and rice beer in both the groom's and bride's village is not so many as in a *DB*, and

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

583 small-scale celebration, or all these practices may be dispensed with. If ceremony, bride-price, etc., are included, the form is similar to an attenuated *TD*. Bride-price is often postponed and seldom paid. The cost is Rs. 0–75, or up to 300 lbs. of rice.

125 184 583 There are significant differences in the frequencies of these forms of marriage in the village as compared with the *bustee*. The samples drawn were often smaller than necessary to definitively establish conclusions; the sampling was done primarily to serve as a check on previously uncounted impressions. The results bore out those impressions, though in one case I had no anticipation of what the results would be. Considerable care, based on six months' prior experience, was taken to see that the questions asked of informants were ones they could answer accurately. The only data included here which is based on questions the informants could not answer accurately concern age and the precise number of years ago that any event occurred. It does not seem likely that such errors are particularly relevant to the trends which are reported and analyzed here. Cross checks were made to determine that answers given by informants were truthful and almost always they were found to be so. However, a half-dozen cases were eliminated because of doubt about the truth of information given or because of internal contradictions in the answers given.

Figures on marriage forms among Santal in the traditional setting, i.e., Santal living in villages and practicing agriculture at least until the time they married, are based on a sample of fifty Santal.* All of these lived in villages at least twenty-five

125 184 583 * Of this sample of fifty, thirty-one became industrial workers after marriage and nineteen remained agriculturalists. The thirty-one were interviewed in *bustees*, town *bustees*, and Jamshedpur. The fifty interviewed were not selected by a format random sampling method. We simply went house-to-house at various times and questioned anyone who was home; no one refused to give us the

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

125 miles away from Jamshedpur, the nearest major city. The following frequences of the different forms of marriage were obtained from this sample:

DB	*SB*	*TD*	*NB*	*Total Number*
5 (10%)	20 (40%)	9 (18%)	16 (32%)	50 (100%)

182 Since the four varieties of marriage are graded in terms of cost, it is reasonable to plot farmer's per capita income against marriage form chosen to determine the degree to which income is associated with the form chosen. The figures given in Table 2 are in terms of maunds of husked paddy per person per year after taxation. A maund weighs approximately eighty lbs.

Converting these figures into percentages, one notes that eighty per cent of *DB* fall in the greater-than-thirty-maund category, eighty per cent of *SB* in the greater-than-ten-maund category, 55 per cent of *TD* in the greater-than-ten-maund category, and only twelve per cent of *NB* in the greater-than-ten-maund category. The association between marriage form and per capita income is obvious and consistent throughout. It suggests that per capita income is the largest single determinant of marriage-type choice.

182 Of the other possible countable determinants, the possibility that having either a father or a mother alive at the time of marriage might be significant was considered, since there were

information we requested. The same sampling procedure was used in the case of the *bustee* residents living in the *bustee* at the time of marriage. The nineteen were obtained from two villages in Mayurbhanj; fifteen of these were from Fanderkuta and the other four from the control village. In Fanderkuta the sample seemed ideal since data was obtained from every male in one "Section" (*tola* as in Hindi) of the village. However, over half of these informants had ultimately to be excluded from the sample since they had worked in surrounding mines prior to marriage.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

178 nificant shifts in frequency during this period, nor were there
434 any appreciable changes in the distribution of per capita income.
583 Before considering comparable data from the *bustee*, it is necessary to examine other partial determinants of marriage-
554 type choice so that a controlled comparison can be made. The
583 most significant of these secondary determinants derives from the expectation by the Santal community that members of high standing will validate their status by arranging high forms of marriage—*DB* or *SB*—for their children. These marriages are the occasion for great "pleasure" and the villagers would feel deprived if their "big people" (*maraṅ hoṛ*) were to deny them this opportunity. Since inherited office confers prestige and is partially independent of wealth, it may be presumed, though adequate statistical evidence is lacking, that the holders of hereditary office often feel compelled to choose more expensive forms than income alone would dictate. In support of this contention is the observation that of the seven *DB* of which I have knowledge, all involved the marriage of a son of a hereditary village officer and one was the son of a headman. Although shared values and understandings are prominent determinants of marriage type, idiosyncratic differences such as the desire for prestige may occasionally prove decisive. "Accidents" of contact and personality may compel a young couple to enter
581 into a "love marriage" (*NB*) against parental wishes. Finally,
583 there is the Santal belief that the higher the form of marriage, the greater its chances of lasting. It is possible, therefore, that differences in desire for marriage stability are a factor in marriage form chosen.

125 From the *bustees* a sample of forty-seven was obtained, with
• 184 the majority from Daredih and the rest from nearby *bustees*.
583 All were industrial workers living in a *bustee* at the time of

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

125 184 583 marriage. They were selected by going house-to-house at various times and again no one refused to give us information. About 60 per cent of those Santal who come to Jamshedpur for industrial employment are unmarried when they arrive. The following frequencies of the different forms of marriage were obtained from this sample.

TABLE 3

178 184 583 CHOICE OF MARRIAGE FORM BY *BUSTEE* WORKERS

DB	*SB*	*TD*	*NB*	*Total Number*	*Total Percentages*
0 (0%)	6 (13%)	7 (15%)	34 (72%)	47	(100%)
RURAL FARM WORKERS					
5 (10%)	20 (40%)	9 (18%)	16 (32%)	50	(100%)

A comparison of this data with that obtained from the village-farmer Santal shows a marked decrease in the more expensive and prestigeful *DB* and *SB* and a great increase in the cheapest and least prestigeful *NB* form, among *bustee* workers; this difference may also be regarded as a shift from arranged to unarranged marriages. If a Santal is going to have an arranged marriage of any grade, his parents or guardians must arrange it for him. The question therefore arises whether the shift to *NB* is primarily a choice made by parents or by the industrial workers who are their children. A number of lines of evidence, including the comments of workers, suggest that it is primarily their own option. While most Santal workers maintain a joint interest with their rural relatives in the family property and regularly send home some money and receive some rice, those workers who had arranged marriages

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

178 sent home at that time a larger portion of their income than
• 184 their fellows. Part of the money sent home was expended in
583 the celebration of arranged marriages, which for immigrant workers almost always take place in their native villages. The relatively large amount of money sent home by those who had arranged marriages reflects exceptionally strong ties with the native village; however, even most of these workers have subsequently reduced their rural contribution as their own nuclear-family requirements increased.

182 The crucial fact indicated by the following table is that if
434 one adds the industrial income of the workers at the time of
583 their marriage to the farm income of their rural families, the
184 combined per capita income is higher than that of the sample farmers. Since they must maintain separate households, these figures somewhat overstate available income for the workers. They clearly indicate, however, that the shift to *NB* cannot be attributed in any appreciable degree to lower income. Indeed even if one were to calculate per capita income of the *bustee* workers and their farming families solely on the rural income, the shift to *NB* could still not be accounted for simply by income.

Since those few migrant industrial workers who did have arranged marriages in fact sent home a large portion of their income before marrying, the inclusion of these resources in comparing marriage types seems realistic. Whereas farmers with per capita incomes of over ten maunds have only about 37% *NB*, 82% of the workers with similar income enter into such marriages. This comparison gives some indication of the degree to which the shift to *NB* runs counter to available income.

What must be explained is the shift away from the more

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

182
184
434
583

TABLE 4

COMPARISON OF PER CAPITA INCOME OF *BUSTEE* WORKERS AND THEIR FARMING FAMILIES WITH THAT OF PREVIOUS FARMER SAMPLE

(Income Categories in Maunds Per Capita)*

	0–10	*11–20*	*20*	*Total*
Farmers	36	34	30	100%
Workers	21	34	45	100%

expensive and prestigeful arranged forms of marriage, especially the SB form, to the cheaper, less prestigeful unarranged *NB* in spite of increased per capita income. Furthermore, the evidence indicates that the primary cause cannot be new values gradually applied after taking up new employment. The key factors responsible are spatial separation from parents or guardians and an independent income. Although the *bustee* Santal maintains his connections with family in the native village and seldom requests a division of the land, his independent income provides him with the *de facto* opportunity to spend as he pleases. Physical distance from his kin frees him from their social control and the supporting authority of the villagers. The shift to *NB* by the *bustee* Santal may then be viewed partially as a decision not to share the major part of their income with their rural extended families. In the village they would not have the financial independence to make such a choice, nor would the social relations with kin and villagers permit such a choice even with a separate income if they continued to live in the village. This interpretation is corroborated

* Industrial cash income was converted into husked paddy according to the prevailing price of rice at the time of marriage and added to farm income in husked rice after taxation.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

182 by data on marriage obtained from those factory workers for
184 whom the bustee is the native village. Of five such individuals,
434 all had arranged *SB* marriages and had poured the major share
583 of their income prior to marriage into the family coffers. Hence, it takes migration plus the separate income derived from industrial employment to produce a shift to love marriage.

178 Given that the conditions of migration to industrial employ-
184 ment provide an opportunity for the prospective groom to
584 choose what form of marriage he desires, the question of why
583 he tends to choose the unarranged *NB* remains. The answer appears to be that migration to industrial employment makes marriage primarily a matter of individual concern. In a variety of ways it weakens bonds with extended family, local lineage, and village. Since the bride will not live in the household or the village of the groom's parents, i.e., his native village, neither the parents nor the villagers are so concerned with her. Furthermore, residence in the *bustee* which, as we shall see, is not so solidary as a village, does not facilitate the reciprocal visiting between kin and fellow villagers of the couple which would normally follow a marriage tie. Since migration to industrial employment weakens traditional bonds of solidarity, it not only gives the prospective groom an opportunity to choose an unarranged marriage; it also makes groom, bride, kinsmen, and fellow villagers less desirous of an arranged marriage. All those social ties which are so dramatically expressed in marriage ceremonies and which are consistent with arranged marriages are virtually inoperative for migrants to the *bustee*. Unarranged marriages thus considered are a result of decreased solidarity resulting from migration to industrial employment.

Other considerations may be partially responsible for the

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

178 shift to *NB*. The Santal themselves point to the urgency felt
• 184 by a new arrival in the *bustee* to get someone to cook and take
584 care of the house; but the fact that the mean length of time
583 immigrants spend in the *bustee* before marrying is 3.9 years and that only three of forty-seven are married within their first year of residence militates against this explanation. Any urgency that exists must be limited to the few immigrants who do not join the household of a married relative or friend, usually on a rent paying basis.

More important, freedom from parental and village restraint permits Santal men and women to meet each other and form liaisons. While this intermixing occurs to some extent even in traditional villages at festival and market time, women from moderately prosperous families have some difficulty escaping the watchful eyes of parents and kin. On the other hand, in the *bustee* no one is much interested in preventing liaisons, particularly if parents are not present. The resultant freedom is thus another manifestation of weakened ties with the traditional structure, ties which are not replaced by the *bustee*. Eighteen of the thirty-four *NB* marriages of the *bustee* Santal were contracted with working girls; it is probable that a large proportion of the remaining sixteen were with girls who were living in *bustees* while searching for work.

Evidence of one significant change emerged as an unanticipated consequence of the counting procedures used: between eleven and twenty-one years ago, about 64 per cent of the marriages in the *bustee* were *NB*, while in the period zero to ten years ago, 81 per cent were *NB*. Since per capita income was about the same during both these periods, it is possible that norms regarding marriage are gradually changing in the *bustee*.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 What began as a shift resulting from migration to industrial
178 employment and consequent weakening of traditional social
• 184 bonds may have affected the norms by lessening the stigma of
583 low status traditionally associated with the *NB*.
584 If one may use the term "modernization" to designate those indigenous developments or borrowings which are patently adaptive or characteristic of industrial urban societies, the shift to unarranged marriages with attenuated ceremonial is an example of modernization. Thus, while industrial development and migration to industrial employment have in a number of ways weakened Santal solidarity, the modernization which it has encouraged has in some respects suggested cultural alternatives not characteristic of traditional Hindu society. Insofar as this has been true, modernization has contributed to the maintenance of distinctiveness and solidarity and thereby inhibited
[171] assimilation. Many aspects of modernization, however, are likely to be equally operative among Hindu and Santal, especially in the long run, so that the cultures are made more alike.*

The Decline of Ceremonies in Bustee *and City*

177 Even a casual observer might note that ceremonies in the
178 *bustee* as compared with those in the village are less well at-
184 tended and often attenuated. As for the city Santal, they prac-
796 tice no communal forms of worship like those traditionally performed at the "Sacred Grove" as long as they remain in the city; often they do not even perform ancestor worship in

[114] * Dr. Milton Singer called my attention to the significance of modernization with respect to my data on marriage and ceremonial and pointed out its significance in terms of acculturation and assimilation, though I am of course responsible for the form that his remarks have assumed above.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

their Company houses. The temptation to interpret these changes as manifestations of increased secularity on a folk-urban continuum is great. However, a close look at the data suggests that the decline of ceremonies is not so much a question of increased secularity as it is a question of situational factors involved in migration to industrial employment. These factors operate directly to inhibit ceremonial practice and participation and operate indirectly to the same end by contributing to lack of solidarity in the *bustee* and city. Since ceremony both reflects and reinforces solidarity, its decline is both a cause and an effect of declining solidarity.

In the course of field work, I observed and participated in a number of ceremonies in the village, Fanderkuta, and the *bustee*, Daredih. Information concerning ceremonial practices was also obtained by interviews with informants from a variety of villages and *bustees*. Because of a suspicion that my presence, particularly in Daredih, had significantly altered the usual practice, my field assistant observed and reported on one ceremony, *Baha*, after I had left India. His report indicates that my suspicions were well founded. The reasons for decreased participation in and attenuation of ceremonies in the *bustee* as compared with the village are readily apparent if one examines the *Baha* ceremony as practiced in the two communities. Similar reports could be given of any of the other communal ceremonies.

Baha is the great spring festival celebrated in March* and ranking second in importance among annual ceremonies.† The word *Baha* means flower and refers here to the flowers of the Sal tree (*sarjom*; *shorea robusta*) and of the tree known as

* Actually in the Hindu month of *Phalgun* (February–March).

† The most important is known as *Sobrae* and will be briefly discussed later.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

796 practical jokes performed on each other by joking relatives
782 such as pouring water down one another's back terminate the priest's procession.

After these rites the males of each household offer rice beer to their patrilineal ancestors. With religious obligations completed, dancing, singing, mutual visiting, eating, and drinking prevail and may continue through the evening and morning, to the exhaustion of the anthropologist but apparently not of the Santal participants.*

• 184 In the *bustee* celebration of *Baha*, the rites involving the
796 five possessed men are eliminated; otherwise the rites performed are similar, the major difference being in the scale of participation. Since the rites of possession are eliminated, there is no occasion on the first day of the ceremony for all the villagers to gather at the priest's house; indeed, there are no rites to be performed on this day, so that the ceremony is condensed from two days to one. On the second day there is no great procession of dancing men and women accompanying the priest to the Sacred Grove; instead a few men and boys with no fanfare walk beside him to the grove. Those who go are almost all close patrilineal relatives of the priest for whom Daṛedih is a native village. Of the two non-relatives whom I observed accompanying the priest, one was the only immigrant worker who had bought farming land in Daredih; the other was one of the earliest immigrants who had for that reason become assistant headman (*jogmaṅjhi*) of the section (*tola*) of the *bustee* in which the immigrant workers live. Perhaps about half of the adult males of Daredih intermittently came and left during the performance of the rites. At this time one of the

* The rites reported here vary in minor detail from village to village but not in such a manner as to alter the comparison which is made here.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

priest's brothers remarked that "the working people come only when it is time to eat." The priest also complained of this, as he had done at several other ceremonies. However, there were many more present than is usual, for my camera and the prospect of having a photograph taken which might later be obtained from me was a potent lure to these people. My assistant reported almost no workers present at these same rites after I had left India. The remainder of the ceremonies are performed as in the village, except that there is no procession of dancing men and women to lead the priest back into the village.

The attenuation of the ceremony and the relative non-participation of migrant industrial workers is not significantly the result of secularization. In spite of many interviews and casual discussions about the supernatural I found little evidence of decreased belief in the deities or the efficacy of rites. Also, many of these men occasionally returned to their villages for various festivals, and when I saw such men in their native villages I found their participation as ardent and regular as that of any villager.

In my view the most important cause of this attenuation of, and non-participation in, ceremonies is limited identification with the *bustee*, and there is evidence that this is the result of migration to industrial employment. The second most important cause of attenuation and non-participation is the time demands of industrial employment.

Those who participate most regularly and fully have strong grounds for identifying with the *bustee*. Almost all are natives of Daredih. The two other regular and full participants include the only immigrant worker who has bought land in Daredih and a very early immigrant who has become assistant headman.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 178 184 796 621 The former, who had no land in his native village, frequently told me that for him Daredih was his village; the latter, by virtue of his position, of which he is extremely proud, is required to attend rites, and no doubt his status makes the *bustee* and its deities more his own than would otherwise be the case. The others, who have neither agricultural land nor position in Daredih, feel that it is not their village, that the local gods are not quite their gods, that the priest is not quite their priest, and that the founder of the village is not the founder of their village. This lack of commitment is reflected in both the attenuation of and non-participation in the various ceremonies of *Baha*. The Santal themselves say, "Here all are workers so we don't worship so much," or simply, "Here we don't worship so much."

[769] This interpretation rather than secularization is supported by the observation that ancestor worship is generally practiced even by those who do not attend the community rites performed by the priest; in ancestor worship it is, of course, one's own ancestors who receive the offering. The failure to dance before the priest's house and the failure to provide him with a dancing procession to and from the Sacred Grove are indications that he is not quite their priest; the same explanation accounts for their frequent failure to contribute to the sacrifices on behalf of the *bustee*. Indeed, the Santal themselves regard all of these acts as signs of respect to the village leaders, and as already indicated, the priest often complains on this score.

Nor can all these acts, which both express and serve to weaken the solidarity of Daredih, be entirely due to the time [793] demands of industrial employment. The priest is himself an industrial worker, as are many of his patrilineal relatives who live in Daredih, and they are regular participants. Also, the

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 number of immigrant workers present when it comes time to
178 eat the offerings that have been made, drink the rice beer which
184 has been offered, and join in secular dancing for pleasure is
796 invariably greater than those present during the performance
621 of village ceremonials.

It is not that the immigrant workers regard it as wrong to worship the deities of the *bustee*'s Sacred Grove or to offer respect to its priest and founder; on occasion and in varying degrees they will do both. Except for "Old Man Headman" and the boundary deities, the same beings are celebrated in their native villages. It is rather a question of having less attachment than of opposition. As these workers say when asked about non-participation, "It is all right because all is being done properly in my native village."

182 Typically, migration to industrial employment does not re-
423 sult in acquisition of agricultural land at the new place of
464 residence; both limited availability of land in such areas as
621 well as alternative employment make this difficult. Lack of agricultural land belonging to the *bustee* limits identification. Ownership of such land has the opposite effect; as the regular attendance at Daredih's communal ceremonies by immigrant workers who had purchased land there tends to show. Similarly, the Santal have a long history of migration, and Santal who move to a new village where they acquire land show none of the signs of lack of identification characteristic of immigrant workers in Daredih. Thus it is not simply migration which is responsible for diminished solidarity, but migration to industrial employment.

177 The *Baha* festival was, of course, not the only ceremonial
178 casualty of migration to industrial employment of which I saw
184 evidence at Daredih. At the great *Sohrae* festival, held in Oc-
796

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

177 tober when the harvest is in, the final fourth day's rites are
178 eliminated; these are primarily concerned with collecting and
• 184 stealing rice beer and food from all the houses. During this
796 festival a rite is performed in which the villagers' cows are made to walk over an area where some eggs have been placed. The owner of the cow which first breaks an egg is considered propitious, and he is required to repay the deities for his good fortune by providing the rice beer to be offered on the following year. At the ceremony in Daredih few were in attendance, and that few did not include the immigrant worker whose cow had previously broken the egg, so that another man had to provide the rice beer. Finally, there was a noisy dispute within the *bustee* because the immigrant workers assembled for dancing on the dancing ground (*akhra*) in their section rather than before the house of the headman, as they should have done according to tradition.

At the festival of Sakrat in mid-February, the third most elaborate ceremony, the custom of going house-to-house to collect rice beer is shortened from three days to one day; in addition, a rite in which arrows are shot at pole targets is not practiced. At a village not half a mile further away from the town and only a short distance from Daredih arrow-shooting is practiced; but in this village almost all are native villagers practicing agriculture though the headman and a few others are factory workers besides being farmers. This negative instance of attenuation and non-participation provides further proof of the critical significance of migration to industrial employment.

182 If limited identification with the *bustee* is primarily respon-
184 sible for the decline of ceremony, the time demands of indus-
796 trial employment have been an unwitting accomplice. The time

466
177

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

demands of factory employment are in certain critical ways different than those of agricultural labor. For example, TISCO works on three eight-hour shifts, while the hours of agricultural labor are typically identical for all. Furthermore, in a number of departments of a steel mill there are no occasions, barring a strike, when all work comes to a standstill. This industrial situation makes it impossible for all Santal workers of the community to be present for a ceremony during any fixed period. Some departments give a leave of absence to all their workers for major Hindu festivals, but Santal ceremonials do not always coincide in time with Hindu ones. Nor could such an adjustment, if desired, be easily made, since Santal villages have no fixed days for their ceremonies and each village chooses a day or several days within the appointed month during which the villagers will be free of agricultural labor.

There is a third factor to be taken account of, though it is so entwined with lack of identification that it may only be distinguished analytically. Since the immigrant workers seldom have agricultural land in the *bustee*, some of the rites performed at various ceremonies which concern agricultural abundance, such as *Baha*, are of diminished interest. To be sure, they probably have land in their native village contributing to their own and their relatives' income, but, as they remark, "It is all right not to participate here because it is all being done properly in my native village." This attitude is closely related to lack of identification since, as already indicated, the place where one has land is likely to be regarded as one's own village. Connected with this attitude is the immigrant worker's intention of eventually retiring to his native village to live off the land. He may even look forward to purchasing his land with his industrial earnings.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

in the name of the Hindu deities invoked. Although this activity has recently been somewhat curtailed for reasons soon to be discussed, it is still possible to observe Santal worshipping Jugganath at the Cart Festival (*Rath Jatra*) in Baripoda, the capital of Mayurbhanj. Many Santal, even in villages where there are few Hindus, may also be seen immersing the Hindu Tusu goddess. In spite of these activities, in which most Santal have engaged, and even though all Santal ceremonies have some Hindu elements, almost all southern Santal have remained firmly attached to their own deities, and there have been no mass conversions.

The Indian government's figures on Hindu religious identification are largely an artifice of census methods, and since at least the 1920's, often of coercion as well. Culshaw, for example, commments that:

> The prevailing Indian identification of race with religion has caused some confusion in their [the Santals'] minds, but the fact that about 50 per cent of Santal were returned in 1931 as Hindus and most of the remainder as followers of tribal religion indicated the heightened political consciousness of the enumerators more than any real division within the tribe.[2]

Many Santal reported to me that they were pressured by local Hindu authorities to register themselves as Hindus. Others claimed that ignorance played a major role in the returns; the census-takers asked, "What is your religion?" (*Dhorom*; Oriya), and most Santal, it is said, did not understand this word. When it was explained they would reply "Santal religion," and the census-taker would then say, "That is your caste (*jāti*), not

[2] Culshaw 1949:15.

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

668 539 771 ligion. . . . Some literate people also are leading us in a bad direction. In eating and clothing we often follow the *diku* way; we are departing from the way of our own society.

177 178 796 The final cultural manifestation to be discussed brings us back to the Durga Puja anecdote with which this chapter began. In the spirit of solidarity every effort is being made to prevent attendance at and participation in Hindu ceremonies. One of the dangers inherent in attendance and participation is the emulation of Hindu ways and the development of Hindu identification. The second danger stems from the manner of Santal participation, i.e., the Santal tendency to engage in mixed dancing, to become drunk, and in general to publicly display those forms of "pleasure" which are the attributes of low rank. The third danger bears a resemblance to the objection voiced by the city Santal, Mr. F., that the Santal are cheated by the clever *dikus*. No doubt there is some cheating, but what is really objectionable is that on such occasions considerable money is spent on "pleasure" and is thus not available for the serious business of rank improvement.

• 184 668 796 A more positive attempt to increase solidarity is the recent effort to get all Santal villages to celebrate their festivals simultaneously and to set the dates for such occasions so that they will not coincide with Hindu ceremonies. This effort has had a limited success in Mayurbhanj but has not been adopted generally because (1) the traditionally important visiting and reciprocity made possible by non-simultaneous ceremonies would have to be sacrificed, and (2) industrial workers now attending those of their own festivals which are held at the same time as Hindu ones on "free time" (permissible leave periods during which they are paid) would have to take leave without pay or forego all ceremonies. In principle, however,

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

184 668 796 all agree that the recent proposal for simultaneity is one that ought to be implemented.

Mr. F., the acculturated city Santal raised by a Brahman family, was essentially opposed to attendance at the Durga Puja festival in Jamshedpur because of its danger to solidarity. His own acculturation and assimilationist tendencies were acquired before the opening of the political rank path. Today, despite some anxiety regarding the practice of certain distinctive practices, he is among the leaders of the movement for social solidarity and cultural separatism. No wonder that he should have complained, even though in error, about the passage in the Santal ethnography which seemed to him to say that "Santal only improve when in contact with Hindus."

668 796 [115]

668 The new solidarity fostered by political democracy is a new solidarity and not simply a return to traditional solidarity, at least for the immigrant industrial workers. It is they who are in the forefront of the movement, and there is no doubt that they are now bound to their people much more tightly than heretofore. But this does not make a *bustee* into a native village; it does not make marriage into a bond between kinship groups and villages; it does not eliminate the separate income and individual mobility of factory employment. In short, it does not recreate the traditional social basis for traditional solidarity. Instead it creates a new direct bond with all the Santal and to a somewhat lesser degree with all other tribals of the area. This new bond rests ultimately on the somewhat tenuous opportunity for the Santal and other tribals to function as a successful interest group. Given enough time, perhaps the new "likenesses" will be of enough force to hold the Santal and other tribals together in spite of change in the avenues of mobility.

[P. 120 is blank]

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
AW42 Santal AW42

648 782 question that this pressure is the result of repugnance as well as solidarity needs.

177 554 The tendency to borrow which follows rank concession undermines solidarity, for all borrowing, by reducing distinctiveness, weakens solidarity, and borrowing of traits which directly represent solidarity is especially debilitating. Emulative borrowing not only eradicates boundary markers but is destructive of the internal aspect of solidarity, since it is likely to be more intense among segments of the encysted society with superior status. This differential emulation arises largely because of the following conditions: (1) the elite tend to have more intimate contact with members of higher social units because they are often representatives of their society in inter-societal relations, (2) they may attract a coterie belonging to higher social units but personally limited in political and economic power; such a coterie derives political and economic advantage from the relationship and confers prestige on its benefactor, (3) no amount of emulation in the absence of the requisite political and/or economic power can achieve rank improvement; the recognition of this fact contributes to differential emulation since the wealthy and powerful are the only ones in a position to attain higher rank in exogenous relations through emulation. Such differential emulation and the type of external relations described here have been noted among the Santal as well as other tribes in the area.

The impact of differential emulation on internal solidarity is to reduce "likeness" and to provide a cultural basis for divisive status distinctions. The ubiquitousness of "envy" and [184] connected witchcraft in Santal social relations, and the difficulty of relations between the educated Santal elite and the non-elite exemplify this effect. The cultural gap between the

539 own sept. The bride may be of any sept, provided the young man is of a different one". Then they lived on; living in this way a very long time passed, and they multiplied exceedingly.

Thereupon they went to Khọj kaman[18]. Living there mankind became very bad, they became like buffaloes and buffalo-cows, they did not respect each other. Seeing all this Ṭhạkur became very angry, and he firmly made up his mind to destroy mankind, if they did not return to him. So he called them to come: "Come, mankind, come back to me". But they did not heed his word. Therefore Ṭhạkur called to him whether it was Pilcu Haṛam and Pilcu Buḍhi or another holy pair (some people say that Pilcu Haṛam and Pilcu Buḍhi died in Hihiṛi Pipiṛi) and said to them: "Mankind does not listen to my word; therefore I will make an end of them. But you two go into the cave in the Harata mountain; there you two will be saved".

These two listened to (obeyed) Ṭhạkur's word. They went into the mountain cave. When they had gone in there, for seven days and seven nights Ṭhạkur let fire-rain (some gurus say, sky-rain) stream down from the sky and destroyed mankind and animals, every one of them, only the two who were in the Harata mountain cave were saved and left alive. About this they sing:

Seven days seven nights fire-rain,
Seven days seven nights uninterruptedly,
Where were you, you two human beings?
Where did you two find shelter?

It is there, it is there the Harata,
It is there, it is there the mountain-cave;
There we were we two,
There we two found shelter.

Then it cleared up; when it had cleared up the two human beings were coming out from the cave; then they saw a buffalo-cow that had fallen down there. Thereupon they found a cow; this one was pressed down under a halfburnt big log; one side of the cow was burnt and stripped off, and one side was whole. They sing:

Glowing cinders, the cow fell under the log,
Pulverized ashes, the fallen down buffalo cow.

[173] [184] [18] Some gurus mention a number of different countries where the ancestors stayed for "who knows for how many years" (as they express themselves). From Hihiṛi Pipiṛi they went to Hohoro Bombero (also called Haharo Bambaro, by some); from there to Ayaro Payaro, then to Jhạl daḷ (lit., long water); from there to Dudumul, and then to Aere Kaeṇḍe; from there to Haradata and then to Khọj kaman. Some gurus do not mention Jhạl daḷ and enumerate from Dudumul to Ajodana, thereupon to Haradata, to Khọjkanọi, thereupon to Sasaṅ beḍa and then to Aere Kaeṇḍe; from there to Jạrpi and from this country to Cae Campa. Again others mention the countries in the following order: Ayaro Payaro, Dudumul, Ajodana, Jhạl daḷ, Aere Kaeṇḍe, Haradata, Khọj kamọi and through Toṛo Pokhori Baha Bandola to Cae Campa.

2: Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

They eat this. The mother-in-law then combs the bride and ties up her hair and applies sindur to her. The bridegroom they also make ready. For the bride they bring out one large pot of beer and five seers of flattened rice. The flattened rice she ties up in a cloth. Thereupon she salutes her parents-in-law; the two brothers of the bride and the marriage-broker also salute them. The bride takes the beer on her head, and the cloth-bundle with the flattened rice she carries under her armpit: there they then are off to the old home of the bride. When they reach there, they wash the feet of the two, the elder and younger sisters of the bride do this. Thereupon they take hold of the bridegroom's leg. They set him free when he gives them money or necklaces; thereupon they pour water on each other and salute each other. They take the two inside the house and give them food. 585

When it becomes evening, they call the village headman and his deputy and their ones and all the village people. When they have come, the bride and bridegroom salute them. First the father of the bride offers the beer and the flattened rice that they call brought-along gifts to the dead ancestors and to Maraṅ buru. Then they bring out the beer and the flattened rice and give it to the village people, who eat and drink, dividing it between themselves. This beer they call "umbilical cord burying beer". The elderly men then talk together: Having got good omens, a bullock on the right-hand side, a woodpecker on the left-hand side, we have, as is seen here, joined the bonds, we have had a marriage — we have settled taking the bride and bridegroom away and bringing them back; beer and flattened rice we have also got sufficiently; in all respects it has been sufficient; please, you two, the bride's parents, let this especially be your grief. They both answer: Yes, Sir, they who grieve have gone in advance.

The bride and the bridegroom then stay there for two nights. The marriage-broker then says: I shall take them there. They make ready for them one pot of beer and five seers flattened rice. The girl carries this away on her head and under her armpit. After having saluted those there, they go together with the marriage-broker to the bridegroom's home. When they have arrived there, they call all the village people together. As they did with the beer and the flattened rice in the bride's old home, in the same way they also act in the bridegroom's home. They eat and drink, and here also they make formal recitations as in the bride's old home. Thereupon all go to their respective homes. Now the bride and bridegroom are settled for good.

g. Tuṅki dipil[42] marriage.

This is the marriage of poor people. The bridegroom does not go to the home of the bride, only the marriage-broker and a bridegroom's party of five go there. They do not make a marriage-shed, and they do not put the bridegroom's party up in outside lodgings. 585 184.

[42] See Dictionary s. v.

2; Skrefsrud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

585 The customary dues are as in a marriage with parties; eating and drinking and beer are
• 184 also in the same way. After having had food and drink the bridegroom's party bring the bride to the bridegroom's home. Three brothers of the bride and a duenna go along with the girl. For "finishing the painting" and for "fireplace damages" nothing has to be given. The applying of sindur is done in the house of the bridegroom. Here they also act as customary at a marriage with parties. In connexion with taking the pair away and back again it is also as in other marriages.

h. Ghaṛdi jāwāe[61] (house son-in-law).

583 People who have no son, or whose sons are small and not fit to do any work, such people keep house sons-in-law, when they have grown up daughters; and only a poor man or an orphan will stay as a house son-in-law. House sons-in-law have no brideprice or expenses to pay, nor have they any customary dues to give; the expenses are all on the girl's side. The marriage is performed for them like for other people. They serve for the bride five years with their father-in-law. They do not get any wages, only food and clothes. When they take in a house son-in-law, they show him a calf. If before the five years are gone, the girl does not pull together with her husband, he goes away taking the calf with him. At the time when the two are married the father gives also the girl a calf. And for five years she gets her reaping perquisites, and this paddy she gives out on interest to somebody. When five years have passed, they will, if they are pleased, stay on, getting wages; if not, they leave.

[428] And if a girl's parents have no male children, and if the house son-in-law and his wife will take care of and feed the two (parents) until death, the two will get the house and household, all the agricultural and other land, and they will get half the cattle; the other half the brothers (or cousins) of the girl's father will get. The ghaṛdi jāwāe and his wife have to bear the expenses in connexion with the final funeral ceremonies. If there are two or three house sons-in-law, they divide.

i. The marriage of widowers, widows, and divorced ones.

587 Widowers are not liked; therefore (girls) will not quickly agree to be married to such
[539] ones. They say: "As a widower snarled"; "a widower a worn-out broom, scraping, scraping, who will be fool enough to agree to be married to such a one"?

Divorced men are not liked either. They say: "A divorced man, a fickle fellow, who knows for how many days."

They also put blame on widows. They say: "A widow, a stallion, neighing, neighing."

Divorced girls are especially blamed. They say: "A divorced girl, the head of a maena, smooth, smooth"; "a divorced girl, a green Bulbul bird, they cry in a thousand ways";

[61] See Dictionary s. v.

2; Skrefarud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

beans horeć, raber, ghaṅgra, sutri; further alpalus, vegetables, fowls, pigs, goats, hares, peafowls, the Indian Gaur, the Samber Stag, birds, and the winged creation. And salt they were preparing from saline earth. They scrape off and bring some earth, mix it up in an earthenware pot and strain it with water; they boil the water, and when the water evaporates, the salt comes there. Because it is very pungent, they cover it up in a cloth and bury it in hot ashes; then it becomes tasty salt. They were preparing this during the cold season. Oil they were pressing out of different forest fruits; they were weaving clothes for themselves. People of the Ṭuḍu sept were making all kinds of implements of iron; and they were themselves making winnowing-fans and baskets, earthenware vessels, and so on. Whether we formerly had gold or not, we do not know; but in the old country they called gold samanom. Later on people of the Baske sept were transacting business, buying and selling by barter, and since rupees and pice have appeared, we buy and sell using money. Formerly also the village people were bartering, some bartered buffaloes for goats, some goats for pigs, and so on.

178 433 [262] [263] [184] 178 437 [184]

Nowadays people of both sexes have become very lazy; they do not press oil, neither do they prepare salt; they do not much weave cloth either; they buy everything; thereby we Santals are becoming poor, and we are becoming deeply involved in debt to the money-lenders. [426]

v. About debts and loans.

In former times no people were getting into debt or taking loans from the money-lenders; and there were no money-lenders either. In the Sikhar country the money-lenders found us for the first time. There the first money-lender with the Santals lived in Nanḍuara. From that time up to now we are in their hands, and they are tearing us up like vultures. By constantly paying we become numb; still the debt never comes to an end. They say: "If a seer has come into the house, it will never get out again"; "a Deko usurer, an old hyena, even old bones they crunch". Really it was also due to hardship in connexion with these that we ran away from Sikhar. At first they did not unrighteously charge us interest to such a degree; they were taking only 25 pct., in paddy or money; but gradually they commenced to charge exorbitantly. For a debt of three or four rupees they would without justice or reason drive pair after pair of plough-cattle away, and if you remonstrated with them, they would at once commence to strike.

178 426 [539]

But there is fault also on our side. Foolishly the Santals run into the hands of the usurers; whether they will be able to pay back or not, this they do not think of, and when they have what is needed to pay with, they will not pay at once; consequently interest upon interest is heaped up; thereupon the money-lender comes and carries all and everything away. And in the present age many Santals also deceitfully cheat the usurers and money-lenders of what is their right.

S. Mukherjea O. Y-1,-3 (ca. 1933-1939) 1952
AW42 Santal AW42

Mundà-tribes are the earliest inhabitants of India of whom we have any knowledge.

The foregoing is a peep into the earliest chapters of Indian history to find materials to construct a rational hypothesis as regards the possible origins of the Mundà-tribes. References from Sanskrit texts could be given, but we can perhaps state without fear of contradiction that no scientific data have as yet been unearthed by the investigators as may enable them to frame a scientifically tenable theory. One can easily form vague surmises on the basis of still more vague materials furnished by the early Aryan myths and Puranic traditions; but they leave the serious student of social history wondering if he is not really undergoing the labours of Sisyphus. So it is that historians take shelter under mystifying metaphors when they draw the "veil of obscurity" over the earliest epochs of Indian history. Others, the more assiduous, traverse all the quagmire and build from time to time, interesting theories to be pulled down again by later investigators like a house of cards. But still the search goes on.

We make no apology, therefore, to present before the reader at this stage an idea of the Santal theory of Creation and their migration from their original seat, for what it is worth.

We need hardly add that these are oral traditions, as the Santals have no written script of their

S. Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (e.s. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

own ; and although there are local variations in different areas where the Santals are found at present, they agree essentially in substance.

Santal Genesis and Exodus[1]

The "Hòṛkorèn Mare Hapṛamko Reak' Katha[2]" which contains the Institutes and traditions of the Santals, lays it down that man was created in the east, the land of the Rising Sun. According to them, in the beginning there was only water and underneath the waters soil. Then Ṭhàkur Jiu (*the spirit of God*) created the aquatic animals as the crab, alligator, crocodile, "raghòp'-boar" (*whale*), tortoise, earth-worm, lobster and others.

Then Ṭhàkur Jiu said, "What shall I create now ? I shall create man." So he made men in dual form out of earth. And as he was going to breathe life-breath into them, lo! from the skies "siñ sadòm" (*horse from the sun*) came down and destroyed the two images.

Ṭhàkur Jiu was very sorry. He said that he would no more make men but create birds.

[113]

1. This was published in the form of an article in the Mayurbhanj Chronicle, January, 1938, being a contribution by the author.

2. With acknowledgements to Mr. R. Kisku Rapaz, Assistant Headmaster, Dumka Zila School and the Benagaria Mission Press, Santal Parganas, which publishes the book.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

114 similar to the tradition as narrated by us, and takes
174 the reader through the Santal sojourn at Hihiri Pipiri, Sasan beda, Khòj kaman, Hara or Harata and Jàrpi. But what is most important in the version is that the author has sought to identify, with query marks of course, the mythical seats with modern geographical names. Thus he seems to think that Aere may be Iran, Kaeṇḍe may be Kandahar, Cae might refer to the Chinic Tartary and the fabled Campa of Santal myth, the land of seven rivers with Sapta Sind, the present Punjab, where the early Santals dwelt for long, and where their institutions took rise, and lastly Sikhàr to be the modern Hazaribagh district. The other point to note is that this account mentions some rivers among which are the Maha nàni, Sinjo nàni, Giru nàni, the Sura nàni and the Gua nàni by whose side the immigrants successively lived.

We should mention here that the foregoing traditional story tallied in essential particulars with that told by the Santals of Mayurbhanj during our investigations there and we have noted the minor differences in the foot-notes.

184 It is, however, very interesting to note the major
776 variations with the traditions as noted by "Horkoṛèn Mare Hapṛamko Reak' Katha" from that obtaining in Mayurbhanj. In the first place, all the members of a conference of the old Santals insisted on

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

calling "Thàkur Jiu' as "Dhòròm". Nabin Mañjhi, Headman of Chamardahani, Muruda, explained that Dhòròm is the Creator of the world according to Santal belief. Being asked if the deity is worshipped at present by the Santals, he replied that Dhòròm is invoked during all marriage ceremonies with offerings of pure water and nothing else. Closely questioned as to whether the god had any shape or form, he answered that he had none and was 'nirakar' (*formless*). Secondly, the Santals of Muruda led by Nabin Mañjhi gave us some additional information as to how the first parents prepared the first drink. This was what they did. Gòròm baba asked them to grind grass-seeds and later directed them to bring the water from a fountain called *tatijhari*, by drinking which the monkeys became drunk as it washed the roots of a plant named *ràmu ran*.[1] [A plant of the name exists in Mayurbhanj and is extensively used in the preparation of hàndia (*rice-beer*)]. Then these two substances were mixed together to make the drink of the first parents. Thirdly, we have seen in the foregoing account that the Santals, while at Hihiri Pipiri were divided into seven clans and it is only after their migration from Sasañ beda that they

1. Ràmu—The ferment used in the manufacture of rice-beer, Ran—drug (Dr. Campbell).

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

173
184
614
114

added five more. The Mayurbhanj Santals did not agree with this, although it tallies with the account of Risley.[1] They said that all the clans were formed together and narrated a story to support their contention. According to them Pilcu Haṛam and Pilcu Buḍhi had twelve sons. All of them went for a hunt and after returning, some asked their mother for water, others for food. The mother saw that each of her sons had brought a particular article along with him. Henceforth, their respective clans were formed accordingly. Thus the son who had brought home a "murum," (*a horn-less animal, Nilgae or blue cow, Portax picta*) came to be known as Murmu. Màrṇḍi was named so because he ate the husks of corn, Hansdak' because he had killed a wild duck. The name Ṭuḍu came from the wild-fowl, Besra from wild-buffalo, Pànuria (*called Copeyàr in Mayurbhanj*) from wild-pigeons, Gòndowar from dāṇḍkà-hako, a kind of fish, and Còṇṛèn from a lizard. Of the rest *Baske* derived his name from the *baske*[2] (fermented rice) he had eaten and Hèmbròm, because of a fruit he had brought (said to be *tiril*, Oriya *kendu*, a fruit like mangosten). No explanation was forthcoming as to how the Kiskus and Sòrèns

1. Risley, *People of India*, App. VII, page clix.

2. Baske = left over from the previous meal, fusty, stale, unfinished. (Campbell's dictionary).

3i Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

derived their names. About them, the Mayurbhanj Santals added that Kisku did not bring anything, while returning from hunt. He was the eldest, so he was known as Kisku and was their tribal chief, whlie Sòrèn became his orderly. Gòndwar did not go to the hunt at all, so he was considered as the worst of all the clans.

Risley does not think that the story of the wandering of the Santals deserves serious consideration "neither as a record of actual wandering, nor as an example of the working of the myth-making faculty."[1] Considering how from the same data Mr. Skrefsrud tried to prove that the Santals came from the North-west and Col. Dalton from Assam, he concludes that both the hypotheses are untenable. Continuing he says,[2] "If, however, the legends of the Santals are regarded as accounts of recent migrations, their general purport will be found to be fairly in accord with actual facts. Without pressing the conjecture mentioned above, that Ahiri pipri may be no other than pargana Ahuri in the north-west of Hazaribagh district, it is clear that a large and important Santal colony was once settled in the parganas Chai and Champa in the same district. A tradition is noticed by Col. Dalton of an old fort in Chai occupied by

1. Risley, *People of India*, App. vii, p. clix.
2. Risley, *People of India*, App. viii, p. clix.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

212 Santal Parganas has been through its medium. Side
177 by side with the Roman script, the Bengali script has been used by some Santals in their publications notably by Raghunath Mañjhi of Rainrangpur, Mayurbhanj, in his collection of Santal Folk-songs, and by the Hindu Mission, Rajmahal, in their Santal literature. Some in the Mayurbhanj State have, however, adopted the Oriya script for Santali. While at present these three scripts are claiming for mastery, an attempt was made by Raghunath Mañjhi a school-master, mentioned above, to introduce a script which he himself invented. The script was shown to us by its author and it is understood that a section at least of Santal opinion advocated its acceptance, while others were of opinion that a fourth would lead to confusion, there being already too many in the field.

191 Undoubtedly for facilities of social intercourse with the '*Deko*' (*non-Santal*) world, most of the Santals are bi-lingual. One can notice them speaking a broken Bengali in the Santal Parganas and Oriya in Mayurbhanj ; and during our investigations about the Santals in the latter state, we found them following Bengali remarkably well. The Santals residing
[177] in the heart of Bengal, speak Bengali fluently enough,
• [184] and some, as in the small colony of Santals in Chinsurah, Hughly, are perilously near forgetting their tribal manners and customs.

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

them combed in a nice knob at the back of their head and decorate them with flowers of all hues and frequently with tufts of red silk.

In Mayurbhanj, we found the children upto five wearing a very short loin-cloth, worn round a coloured string tied at the waist (Bengali, *ghunsi*; Santali, *danda jhinjhir*). They call this cloth "gendre." Girls after their tenth year wear a thick cloth called "panhand" in Santali (Oriya, *labanga*). Some of these have a bright violet border. Such "saris" reach only upto the knee, as they measure three cubits in length and one and a half cubits in width. But they take care to cover the upper part of their bodies with another part of the same measurement, called "gamcha" by them.[1] It should however be mentioned that the dress of Santal women varies from area to area and those in intimate contact of Hindu life have taken to using the mill-made "saris" as a point of fashion, which are wound several times round the waist, and then carried over the left shoulder.

But women, who have retained their primitive style intact, make several pleats in the portion bound round the waist at the front, and the end thrown over the shoulder from behind falls over the breast,

1 Dr. Campbell in his Dictionary (Santali to English), calls this *Gögöh*'.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

and the edges are tucked in on either side into the portion round the middle.[1] A second dress is of "kantha"-cloth (pieces of old cloth sewn together) which is bound by women round the waist and completed with another piece of cloth thrown over the shoulder and covering the breast. Yet another fashion known as "lebda gögök" and "lebda rakap," requires the cloth to be passed over the left shoulder in front, with the end hanging down the back.[2]

The men are scantily dressed. In the Santal Parganas, one generally sees them wearing a short cloth tied at the waist, the ends being passed on and secured near the end of the spine to allow free movement. Mayurbhanj Santals wear at home, a loin cloth, which they call "panchi" (Bengali, *gamcha*); but when going out, they put on a long sheet of thick cloth, five cubits in length and one and a half cubit in width, which they term "kutcha." We learnt that these are sometimes woven at home.

Ornaments

Women all over the world are fond of ornaments and Santal women are no exception to the general rule. Flowers of all colours are stuck to their hair, and over their ears, but those who can just afford,

1 Dr. Campbell's Dictionary, p. 43.
2 Ditto, p. Ditto.

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

735
539

Jòmak' ñunyak' bòeha bànuk' taleya,
Mènt' ñèpèl bòeha ahajibà.
Akal kèdae gateñ sāwanek'edae
Itā rànu gateñ, bale ñawana,
Sanam hòpòniñko ḍiṅgàṛ cabayen.

(Translation)

Welcome, welcome! O friends dear!
(We have) neither food nor drink to offer.
But we offer you our greetings,
(It matters little whether) the harvest
failed or it was in plenty;
For want of seeds (and consequent want
of food)
All my sons have nothing of their own.

342 Out to trace variations in Mayurbhanj from the
184 Santals in the Santal Parganas, we were somewhat
735 pleased to see that their houses were better built
and more commodious, but the inner economic
structure told the self-same tale as in the folk-song.
735 We selected some villages at random and questioned
[114] the Santals (without claiming for ourselves the func-
[123] tions of the economic surveyor) on the point. But
they replied, "We are very poor. Our average
735 agricultural income is from Rs. 5 to 6 per month.
434 Those more industrious supplement it by working as
[464] day labourers which may bring them Rs. 3 more.
[426] But about half of the population are indebted to

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

In some areas, as in the sadar sub-division of Mayurbhanj, there is an interesting variation in the custom requiring both the complainant and accused to pay jointly for the feast of the judges, in the proportion of ten annas for the accused and six annas for the complainant in the rupee. Generally the "pañc" themselves eat the dinner; the public take no part in it. The contending parties then depart after a cordial mutual *johar* (salutation). In frivolous cases, the complainant has got to pay a fine himself. So we see that the Headman is not the sole repository of law in the eye of tribal jurisprudence to settle disputes; he must consult the "*Mònṛèn* hòṛ" to arrive at a decision.

The Headman with the assembly decides all matters of a socio-religious, legal and quasi-legal nature of the village. They are the fountain-heads of justice and custodians of Santal customs and manners, the first court of law both civil and criminal, for the Santal is generally averse to litigation in legally constituted courts, and prefers the arbitration of his village-elders.

To go into details, the Headman with his assembly will raise subscriptions for the public festivals like the December Harvest-Home, for religious feasts, and for offering libations to the deities of serious epidemics affecting the tribe. In all cases of marriage and funerals, the Headman and his advisory body must attend. Such ceremonies without them are unthinkable to the Santal.

St Mukherjea O. Y-4, 6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

Supreme Court of the Santals

224 634 692 [796] According to immemorial custom, the Santals join together in an annual hunt (*Lò bir sendra*) on the conclusion of the spring flower-festival, when opportunity is taken to discuss various questions affecting the social and religious problems of the tribe, and to decide the reference cases from the decisions of the *Desh-Pròdhans*.

Here grave social offences necessitating social excommunication and ostracism (*Bitlshà*), (as we shall see in detail very soon) constitute subjects of grave deliberation by the tribe. Such meetings are [211] convened by the circulation of a mysterious notice [184] by means of a knot tied to a rope as in Mayurbhanj, [202] or a branch of *Sal* tree carried from *hat* (market) to *hat* (as in Santal Parganas). About the constitution [114] of this privy-council, Dr. Campbell opines that a person, *Dihri* (the superintendent of the hunt), is also the president of the court which assembles in the evening, but all that our enquiries revealed in Mayurbhanj was that the Pargana, the Desh-Pròdhans of the tribe assisted by the elders called Desh-Panchayet, jointly deliberate together before declaring their verdict.

[184] [178] This ancient institution, called in Santal lore *Sendra bir bichar* (a trial during a hunt at a forest) is almost extinct in Mayurbhanj, as wild games are protected by the State and no question of a tribal hunt

31 Mukherjee O. Y-4,6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

arises ; and those days are no more when it was a regular feature of Santal life with the mass dancing and drinking associated with its conclusion. So it is that the Santals of Mayurbhanj have got a second string to their bow, in the form of a parliament during *Sakrat baske*, (*Mòkòrbasi*, on the second of Magh) in case the hunting assembly may not be convened for want of sufficient attraction.

Supreme council at Mòkòrbasi

This parliament of the *Desh-Pròdhans* is held at some halting place (*gadi* or *mukam*) towards the river Damodar to which the Santals journey to throw the bones of their dead relations in the holy river. Here it is that the people aggrieved by the decision of the *Desh-Pròdhans* appeal to the assembly of elders to reopen their cases and try them according to law. Frequently, these appeals are admitted and tried by the assembly of all the *Desh-Pròdhans* of the tribe in consultation with the elders. But here also only important questions relating to the payment of bride-price or restriction of conjugal rights form the subject-matter of the decisions of the supreme court.

Social taboos: Punishment for their breaches

While dealing with the village assembly and its powers and functions, we have observed that as

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

At Mayurbhanj

684 Our enquiries at Mayurbhanj revealed the
184 existence of this institution, the only difference
[579] being that no general unrest was reported within recent memory attending the execution of the tribal punishment, so as to endanger the peace of the land.

692 Here also the parties adduce evidence before the
623 *Panchayet*, and more serious cases are referred to the
634 inter-village council and thence, if necessary, to the
684 Supreme Court during the tribal hunt or the parliament at *Mòkòrbasi*.

684 The special feature of the Mayurbhanj pro-
783 gramme includes installation of a *càuḍàl* (a temple-like
[346] structure made of *Sal* wood) in which straw or mud images of the delinquents are placed, whereas their clothes are hung outside. Then amidst music and beat of drums the ceremony of penance is performed.

Restoration to the Tribal fold

The men who are thus excommunicated are prohibited from any social intercourse with the others as dining and getting their children married. Thus harassed by the villagers, the boycotted persons sometimes leave the village to save themselves and their progeny from ignominy. The position of those who were outcasted for having sexual connexion with people of other races is the worst, for they are

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

428 lawsuits, and even if he does rarely, he fails miserably to establish it.
177
[671
692]

So in the domain of partition and inheritance, we find that the sons share equally, the daughter succeeds when there is no son to the man who dies. The widowed mother has her rights of maintenance recognised at the hands of her sons. The sonless widow becomes the sole proprietor, and like the *Mitakshòra* widow, cannot alienate property without legal necessity.

Adoption (Pushapo)

597 The Santal who has no son can adopt a son in Mayurbhanj. The adopted son is generally a relation and rarely unrelated. The adoption is made in the presence of the Headman and the Panchayet. Now, occasionally, proceedings are recorded in writing, but previously everything was oral. The devolution of property follows the *Mitakshòra* branch of Hindu law.
[177]
[428]

Ghar-Jamai

428 As in the Santal Parganas, the Santals of
184 Mayurbhanj have the custom of providing for their
606 daughters through the institution known as "domesticated son-in-law" (Ghar Janwane or Ghardi Janwane: there is however a subtle difference between the two). His rights here are essentially the same as
428 in S. P. So if there be a son, and such a son-in-law
606

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

wing of the house serves the purpose. A midwife, a Santal woman of the profession, attends on the parturient woman with her elderly women-relatives. In cases of difficult delivery, *Ojha*s (exorcists) are summoned to perform rites so as to expel the ghosts, supposed to be creating difficulties.

When the child is born, the umbilical cord is severed by the midwife with a sharp iron weapon such as an arrow-blade. The baby is now bathed in tepid water and the navel-string buried near the main door of the room of its birth.

As regards ceremonial uncleanliness for the baby and its mother, the practice differs in different areas of Mayurbhanj. Some do not observe any segregation whatsoever; while others observe it for varying periods[1] from one to twenty-one days, during which they may not visit the room, touch the baby or its mother. The observance of this birth-pollution in some areas and its negation in others, throws a flood of light on the influence of others on their customs and manners. During her confinement, the mother is allowed to eat warm rice with salt, leaves of

1. On this point, Nabin Mañjhi, an old Santal said that custom requires that twelve days should be observed. But it has slackened and men now sometimes consider themselves ceremonially clean, immediately after a child-birth in the house.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

843 *Murài arak'* (an edible leaf, the radish, *Raphanus sativus*, Linn.), and garlic. The members of the family have no particular food-prohibition during this period.

844 783 184 In the Santal Parganas, the house and village become religiously unclean. No festivals or sacrifices are held in the village nor anybody dines in the house of child-birth till after purification, three or five days after, by the *chàṭiar* ceremony.

Narta (Name-giving Ceremony)

553 184 The usual Santal custom is to observe the name-giving ceremony between the third and fifth day after birth. But in Mayurbhanj, some observe it within one year, the date being fixed by the head of the family; while there are others, who may delay it up to the tenth year.

553 574 431 On the date of the ceremony being announced, friends and relatives of the family are invited. They arrive on the day fixed, with presents of rice, cloth, *hàṇḍia* (rice-beer), necklaces of beads (*mala*) and *doṛa* (string worn round the waist, pronounced *dara* by Mayurbhanj Santals) for the new-born child. Now the midwife, who delivered the child, sits with the baby facing east, and with a leaf-cup in front, containing turmeric paste, *mohua* oil and water.

553 782 887 An old man of the village offers the rice-beer presented by others and mixed with the family

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

heads of cattle they require as incidental presents to the bride's family, and the date that would suit them for the marriage ceremony. These being satisfactorily settled, the final date is fixed; the intervening number of days being shown in knots in a rope (*Bapla Gira*). Thereafter, one knot is loosened each night and when there are none, it is the day for marriage.

Rates of Bride-price (gònòñ)

Here, some observations as regards the rates of bride-price may prove interesting. Generally speaking, the rate of money payment for buying a bride varies between rupees three to rupees twelve in some quarters. In the Santal Parganas, rupees five is taken to be the average. But at Mayurbhanj, we were faced with two practices, the one insisted on fixed rates as rupees three or five, seven or twelve, whereas, others were disposed to be more elastic as regards any such fixity and even ready to pay more, if financially capable.[1]

As regards the ceremonial presents to the bride's party, if the bride's parents are alive, her father and brother will receive a he-calf each. If her paternal

1. In the Sadar subdivision, Mayurbhanj, bride-price goes up to R. 12. In Bamanghati and Barsai, we gathered, the sum paid does not exceed R. 3.

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

764 [782] [824]

fish added, to be offered to the gods at the cross-road.

On the conclusion of the cremation, water is poured on the pyre, first by the man who sets fire to the body, next by the pall-bearers and lastly by all the members of the tribe present. A bone from the forehead of the deceased is now gathered and kept inside the earthen pot, specially carried for the purpose, and buried under the earth near a *sal*-tree. This practice is uniform throughout Mayurbhanj and Santal Parganas. [184] The funeral party now returns home after bathing themselves and crunching *dhup* (incense).

Now it is time for the meal already cooked at home to be carried to the cross-road, where, near a cottage specially built for the purpose, it is offered to *Maraṅ Buru* (the chief presiding deity) and the spirit of the deceased. [782] After this propitiation, the improvised hut is burnt down, and the party returns home. Custom requires that the head of the household and his wife should partake of the remnant of the offerings along with the villagers, and thereafter, some men will fall in a trance (*jhupar*) and impersonate *Maraṅ Buru* and the deceased, who are closely questioned as regards the death. 764 787 Then an uncanny conversation proceeds for a time about the world of spirits.

A sample of the questions and answers may

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

Thereafter, a special dish is cooked with meat and rice boiled together. All the Santals then dine at the *Jahèrthan*. But the meat of the fowls offered to Jahèr era and Mòntrènko can be eaten by the Nacke (priest) alone.

On the second and third days of the festival, each house-holder sacrifices fowls to Abge Boṅga (the god of the Santal males), Oṛak' Boṅga (the Household deity), the Patriarchs of the tribe and Maraṅ Buru (the Chief Presiding Deity). Ṣongs and dances *en masse* conclude the *Eròk' Sim*, the June sowing festival.

Eròk' Sim, (mentioned also by Dr. Campbell and Risley) is observed all over by the Santals; but at Mayurbhanj, it passes under the more Hinduised name of *Asharia*.

Hàriàṛ Simko (July)[1]

The month of July sees the celebration of the *Hàriàṛ Simko*, when thanks are offered to the gods as the paddy appears green and there are indications of a good crop. A peculiar feature of the ceremonials is that the village deities alone are worshipped on this occasion, but the prayers offered are

1. This is the approximate time for this festival in the Santal Parganas. Risley is, however, disposed to place the *Hàriàṛ Sim* (the feast of the sprouting rice, as he calls it) in September-October (Bhadra).

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

796 almost identical to the *Erok' Sim*, the June sowing
[782] festival.

[114] That this is an essential Santal festival is corro-
[184] borated both by Risley and Dr. Campbell, but the Mayurbhanj Santals do not seem to observe it any longer.

796 *Iṛi Gundli Nànwàni* (The Millet Festival—August)
243 This festival is connected with the offering of
782 the first fruits of millet (Iṛi, *Panicum milleceum* ; Gundli, *Panicum frumentaceum*) to the tribal gods of the Santals.

796 The essentials of the festival are that the
793 *Naeke* (priest) after a purificatory ablution
243 goes to the field of a *raiyat* (tenant) where the crop
782 has ripened and harvests as much as he can. Then he goes to the *Jahèrthan*, cleanses it with cow-dung and offers the corn to all the gods of the Holy Grove viz. Jahèr era, Mòṇṛènko, Marañ Hòṛ, Gosa*ne* era and Pargana. Next he spills milk and utters the hymn:—

[539] 'We salute you Creator (Bapu Ṭhàkur) and Jahèr era. We offer you the first-fruits of our corn. We shall eat these, but let us have no bowel-complaints or head-ache."

The priest then returns to the village and going to the shrine in the Headman's house offers

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS
MAYURBHANJ

the new corn with a similar prayer. The remainder of the millet, he takes home for himself.

The Millet Festival, called *Muchri*, exists in all its details in Mayurbhanj and is observed by the Santals there.

Gamah Purnima (August)

Side by side with these harvest-festivals, the Santals of Mayurbhanj observe *Gamah Purnima* on the full-moon of *Sravan* (August), when cows are fed with salt, *mohua* flowers, rice, the corrosive *bhela* fruit and a grass called *mutha*, their horns being copiously rubbed with oil. Thereafter, men and women dance round a Karam (*Adina Cordifolia*) branch, planted at the *akhra* (place for dance), a special *Karam* dance, and on the conclusion immerse it in water. Ancestors are also propitiated with offerings of rice-beer. The Santals observe the festival along with some of the Hindus. All wear new clothes and indulge in feasts and drinks, not forgetting to feed Brahmins and Vaishnavas.

Karam Pòròb (September-October)

This is a festival observed in September-October. The males of the village go after nightfall and cut a branch of a *Karam* tree (*Adina Cordifolia*,) which they fix in the village lane (*kulhi*) and round which the young people dance till morning, when the Karam branch is thrown into a tank.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1982
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS
MAYURBHANJ

796 *Karam* branch is thrown into a tank. No sacrifices
[782] are offered, but a libation of liquor is poured out to the manes of the village-chief and to *Maraṅ Buru*.[1]

796 Although at first sight, it appears similar to the
184 Mayurbhanj *Gamah-Purnima*, it is not so. In Mayurbhanj, the *Karam puja* is performed for the sake of amusement and welfare of the villagers during the *Gamah Purnima* or the *Sohrae*, as we shall see later. The *Karam Pòròb* may not be performed by the Mayurbhanj Santals if they do not like it and no harm to the villagers is thought to result from its non-performance. This is an extra festival in Mayurbhanj. But it should be noted that there are some who worship the *Karam Boṅga* and perform the *pòròb* as a hereditary practice. But although it is in existence in Mayurbhanj, the festival is observed only occasionally.

Ianthar (*November*)

796 On the occasion of the celebration of the *Ianthar*
[782] in November, the villagers subscribe towards a hog or
[793] a ram in honour of the tribal deity, *Ianthar*; and it is sacrificed before the *Parganathan* (the shrine of the village deity, *Pargana*) by a special priest called *Kuḍàm Naeke*. The special feature of the festival

---

1. Dr. Campbell, *Santali to English Dictionary*, page 318.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

the Hindu festival associated with the worship of the goddess *Kali*. The essential difference between this and the Santal Parganas festival, we have noted in the foregoing pages, is that there is no *Hako katkòm* (catching fish and crabs) and *Jale* (the day of greetings) which concludes the function. Although there is bound to be some overlapping, we propose to deal with this in some detail, so that the reader can have some idea of the special features seen at Mayurbhanj.

On the morning of the first day, called *Um* or *Goṭh Puja*, the *Chatia* (an Oriya word for *Goḍet*) collects subscriptions of fowls and rice from all the villagers and heaps them in the house of the priest. The villagers soon assemble there. All ingredients for the worship, such as cow-dung, sun-dried rice, vermilion, *mithi* (a kind of spice), powdered rice (sun-dried) are placed in a winnowing-fan which the priest carries in his right hand, whereas, in his left he takes a pot of water. He is followed by a villager carrying a pot of rice-beer. With the priest at the head, a silent procession of the village arrives at the *goṭh* (field where the cows graze). Here a spot is selected by the priest and cleaned with cow-dung and water. Next, oblations are offered for the good of the corn, cattle and for the peaceful celebration of *Sohrae*. The Headman, thereafter, addresses the gathering requesting the tribe to be prepared

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

This interesting flower-festival is celebrated in Mayurbhanj under the name of "*Salui puja*", which also means a '*sal*-blossom festival'. But during our investigations, we observed certain differences from the customs of the Santal Parganas, we have noted just now.

In the first place, the *Godet* does not take three fowls to the priest on the evening of the first day at Mayurbhanj, but, we understand, the latter keeps them tied in his own house. Secondly, as regards the actor-deities, the Mayurbhanj Santals impersonate five of them and not three as in the Santal Parganas. The two additional ones are Maraṅ Mañjhi Haṛam and Hudiṅ Mañjhi Haṛam. Thirdly, on the conclusion of the second day, the festival is not carried on to a third. But a general hunt called *Baba Baske Sendra* is arranged, when a leg of the animals hunted, is presented to the Headman, who in turn supplies a pot of *hàndia* (rice-beer) to the hunters. Should no game be shot, the tribe will not rest content, for, they must kill a fowl even by force from the priest's house and make the ceremonial present to the Headman. At night, the tribe assemble near the priest's house, and unloose the string of the bow carried to the Holy Grove. The function concludes with a general drink of rice-beer at the priest's expense.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

796 184 787 798

The customary practices, in connection with the *Pata*, vary in different areas. There are some in the Santal Parganas who show signs of supposed spirit-possession (the Santal *jhupar*) with the arrival of the festival. They go here and there like Tagore's maniac (*'khepa'*) in eternal search for the "touch-stone." They dive in a pond, ransack the forests, search the hills, and at last coming upon a stone shout, "Eureka" ("We have found."). And the admiring audience see that they have unearthed a stone, which they all acclaim as the symbol of *Mahadeo*. These people, called *Bhòktas*, then run to the conveners of the Hindu festival *Còròk* and prevail upon them to worship the images ceremonially, and if listened to, they are permitted to join with the devotees and take part in the ceremonials.

796 184 794 [782]

There are others who arrange their own festivals. Such people go begging from house to house for three days previous, and with the proceeds, they buy milk. Then on the eve of the *Pata*, they assemble at a field, where the *Bhòktas* (devotees) erect a hut-temple with subscriptions collected from the tribe; and offer milk, rice and *ghee* to the deity *Mahadeo* with a good deal of ceremony, a goat being sacrificed in a place away from the improvised temple. The ceremonials conclude with special songs and dances in which the Santals take part with a great deal of gusto.

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

796 785 [56] Before we conclude, it may be interesting for the reader to have some idea of the original Hook-swinging festival, which has been declared now a criminal act by legislation, because of danger to human lives. Man in his *Sonthalia and the Sonthals*, gives a description which shows how the hooks for suspending the devotee were "inserted in the muscles of his back, who was generally an inebriated oracle. He was then suspended in mid-air and swung round, apparently hanging by the hooks. I have, however, seen a good many of these revolving martyrs, and although to a casual observer it appears very dreadful to behold a man thus pendant, it is not quite so bad so as it seems, for his friends took the precaution to tie a girth of strong cloth round the victim's body, in such a manner that his weight rests upon the cloth rather than on his muscles. The perforation of the flesh may cost him a few drops of blood, but that is all."

796 184 Not being an orthodox Santal festival, *Pata* is observed only by some classes in Mayurbhanj, and does not belong essentially to the tribal calendar.

Conclusion

105 In the chapter on Santal economic life, we have seen their annual round of activities and seasonal occupations. Now, an agricultural population alone knows the variety of risks and dangers incidental to

3: Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

married quickly. For propitiation, she needs a brown hen (*Herak' Sim*); and if a goat is sacrificed in her honour, it must be a red she-goat.

In course of our investigations at Mayurbhanj, we were shown stones in the *Jahèrthan* (Holy Grove) which were supposed to represent these deities. During all public festivals, huts are raised to worship them suitably. It was stated that in Mayurbhanj three huts are raised; one to house "Jahèr era," "Maraṅ Buru" and "Mòn*r*è*n*ko," a second for "Gosa*n*e era," and the third for another village deity, "Mañjhi Haṛam." But there are instances when a fourth one is insisted on by younger folk, to honour the younger brother of Mañjhi, called "Hudiñ Mañjhi Haṛam." In our references to the practice in the Santal Parganas (e.g. *Baha*, Santal Sal-blossom festival) we have seen that only "Jahèr era," "Gosa*n*e era," "Maraṅ Buru," and "Mò*n*rè*n*ko" have huts for them in the Holy Grove. Mañjhi has his place no doubt, but he is worshipped at the *Mañjhithan*, a separate shrine in the village.

As a matter of fact Mañjhi Boṅga may be supposed to represent the spirits of dead Mañjhis (village Headman). But he is only second to another dignitary, "Pargana," who has power over witches. Both of these are village-deities, although they may not find a place in the *Jahèrthans* of Mayurbhanj Santals.

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

871 1924-25 to 8,473 in 1938-39; i.e. on an average
162 it doubled in course of 15 years.

871 Although in all areas the progress was not the
162 same (in the Santal Parganas during this period the
184 number of pupils under instruction rose very slightly viz. 1428), there was an awareness of the position as evidenced by the fact that the Santal Parganas Enquiry Committee reviewing the position *vis-a-vis* Santal education began their work with the proposition, "The first essential of the aboriginal is more education" and lamented that there was not a single school for the 60,000 Paharias in the Damin Hills.

871 The British government did not neglect abori-
648 ginal education but they had no visible plan of
797 their own. This task was urgently taken up by
177 the missionaries, who along with their hospitals and social service units, ran aboriginal schools of their own. As a result of their social and spiritual programme, a very large number of these tribals were converted to Christianity which meant a change lock, stock and barrel, of aboriginal sets of values. Their souls were sought to be saved. But out emerged a type of English educated people who [539] like our young Michael Madhusudan Dutta might have exclaimed in rapture:

> Long sunk in superstition's night
> By Sin and Satan driven,

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

668 common platform. They long for the development of their distinctive culture—a pre-Dravidian Jharkhand.

177 648 [641] Now with Independence, and its concomitant adult franchise, things are undergoing a rapid transformation. The Santal, along with the other aboriginals, like his more civilised brethren has got to handle a ballot paper. They see that the more advanced Indians are trying to have a better standard of life and are rushing in for more and more of education, for amenities of life hitherto denied to the hill and jungle-folk. Development plans of the government, Community projects, programmes of tribal uplift are gradually throwing open to them roads, motor lorries, schools and fineries. Planes buzz over them, radios blare and torch lights flash. With all the glare of modernism in their eyes, is it a wonder that these aboriginals, so long living idyllic lives in the backwoods of songs and dances are puzzled at the threshold of a New World?

177 So long the seeds of a new order were in the air. Old sets of value now seemed disturbed. In [184] Bolpur area, one could notice new house-types with [342] windows and furniture, they lacked in the past. [352] Santals were found chewing betels, drinking less and [27] taking to milk and tea and cigarettes. Many have [262] given up beef like the Hindus, even buffalo meat and pork have gone off their menu. The old Santal

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

SANTAL PARGANAS

The old Santal would not grow potato due to their conservative instincts even when Pontet asked them, now they grow it along with tomato. The women now wear mill-made saris and in the urban areas of Santal Parganas, they seem indistinguishable from their Hindu sisters, because in fairs and rallies, they generally dress alike. Some widows, it has been seen at Bolpur, dress themselves in white. It is interesting to hear that in some areas, there is lesser divorce. And due to the impact of new ideas women's right in inheritance is being slowly recognised by the state and the society through indirect legal fictions.

With ideas of reform in the atmosphere, some acting as disintegrating forces, others operating on a constructive basis, it was no surprise to us to come across a manifesto signed by some prominent educated Santals of Bengal and some parts of Bihar calling upon their brethren of Midnapore, Bankura, Manbhum, Singbhum and other areas to engage in social reforms for the maintenance of their tribal honour. It stated that the Santals had firmly resolved that:

1. No Santal, man or woman, should drink *Pochoi* (rice-beer) in shops as the tribe had been ruined by drink while the grog-shop owners and *mahajans* were becoming rich. Temperance would help the Santals financially.

Jt Mukherjea. O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42
MAYURBHANJ

836
539
533

This is how a neglected maid sings:

Gai gupiko panja panja,
Gai gupiko bako dedèṛdò.
Kaḍa gupiko panja panja,
Kaḍa gupiko bako dedèṛdò.
Hape hapeniñ sakòm lenge,
Hape hapeniñ sankha lenge.
Ròhòṛ gàḍià ḍheńka leke giñ
koyok' nocòpe.

(Translated)

I ran after the cow-herd boy, he did not commit coitus with me.
I went after the buffalo-boy, he did not cohabit with me.
When I shall make ornaments for my wrists,
When I shall make shell-bracelets for my wrists,
I shall compel glances at me like the crane (ḍheńka) at dried-up ponds.

836
177
184

Some old Santals of Baldiha, Mayurbhanj, were not however disposed to concede to the unmarried girl equal freedom in premarital sexual intercourse with the boys. This handicap on the girls is undoubtedly an influence of Hinduism on the tribe; it appears from the evidence that the original institution of the Santals placed no such restrictions. Whatever that may be, a sane admonition is now

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

Manjhi Haram's (headman) house. On it taxes are collected by the Manjhi Haram and legal disputes are settled. There is no fixed size for the Majhisthan. It is found that the Santals, in different villages make Majhisthans of different dimensions. In a village there was a Majhisthan ten feet long, eight feet broad and two and half feet in height while in another was one five feet long, four feet broad and one foot high. It consists of a raised mud mound over which a neatly thatched roof is constructed. The roof is supported by five upright wooden posts in the four corners of the Majhisthan and one in the centre. At the base of the centre post is stuck a small stone or wooden lump (sometimes shaped as a human head) daubed with vermilion. From the roof an earthen pot is suspended containing water brought from the Jahirsthan for the spirits to drink and beside it hangs a peacock's head. The floor of the Majhisthan is plastered with mud and cowdung.

The Jahirsthan (Sacred Grove): The Jahirsthan is a place where religious ceremonies of the village are performed by the Santals. It is situated at the end of the village and it must be within the boundary of the village. A cluster of sal trees about twenty to twenty-five in number is always required. Among these trees three are essential, and at the foot of each of these three trees a stone is put representing the deities, Jaherera, Turukomonrako, Marang-Buru. The fourth one is an Ashan tree which grows near these three sal trees and at the foot of this tree a stone representing the deity Pargana-bonga is kept. The fifth and the last one is a Mowa tree, which stands a little apart, and at the foot of this tree, a stone is placed to represent

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

of the Kisku sept. Santals are very particular about the honour of their women so far at least as outsiders are concerned and it is quite in keeping with their ideas that a sept formed by liaison with a Diku (non-Santal) should have been looked down upon and eventually banished from the community. 614 539

The names of the sub-septs have been collected from my Santal informant Ram Marandi (Parganait of Sundar Pahari of Godda sub-division). It agrees substantially in detail when I checked up the data from Campbell's Dictionary published in 1899. The sincerity of my informant is to be judged from his not being able to mention any sub-sept Chonrey and Pauria which do not occur in that area. The general impression which I gathered from other Santal dignitaries is that the sub-septs did not generally exist. The sub-septs appear at least in this case not to be exagamous units at all; they rather mark family distinction and traditions, for instance those who would not paint vermilion would be called Sada (white) or those who may have been descended from a headman or a priest would be called Majhikhil or Naikekhil. The sub-septs thus marked an important tendency of the Santal exogamous group either to be divided into sub-groups or sometimes to add a sub-group to itself. This alone explains the disparity in number of the sub-septs in the various septs. There is of course a tendency of the sub-septs to approximate to the number twelve according to the pattern of the total number of the septs. But this is by no means the case. Apparently the one important function of the sub-sept is to distinguish between Nij and Sada which occurs in all the septs. This pertains 614 [115] [114] [302] [184] [302]

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

614 to the use of vermilion and may be due to the impor-
302 tant custom of smearing with vermilion on the occasion
• 184 of marriage and other auspicious ceremonies which once divided the Santals into two groups based on the use and non-use of vermilion. That this was the uppermost idea in the Santal's mind was forcibly impressed on me while taking their measurements and enquiring of their sub-septs; the majority came out with either Sada (white) or Nij (proper). Thus the sub-sept division not being exogamic is not so much a vital part of their social organization; rather it was a division
[174] due to culturtal difference. The possibilities are that once either the vermilion was a borrowed culture trait from outside or its use was given up by a section due to some internal reform movement or influence of some superior non-vermilion-using culture. It is more probable that the use of vermilion was more innate to them becuse the users are called the Nij or proper.
[585] Vermilion, it may be noted, is used by them only on
[171] the occasion of marriage. Among the Bengal Hindus vermilion is not only used in marriage but has to be always worn on the parted hair of the married women, lack of vermilion signifying widowhood. On the other hand in other parts of Hindu India more stress is laid on the use of flowers by the married women. Vermilion is not known in the primitive area of Assam. Thus it is probably a vital part of the culture of Chota Nagpur tribes.

Notes on Sub-septs

614 THA-OK SUB-SEPT
782 Whenever any ceremony (religious) occurs the
184 members of this sub-sept sacrifice a goat or a pig in

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

their houses, and they shut the doors tight and allow no smoke to escape. 614 184 782

MAL SUB-SEPT.

They may not utter the word Mal when engaged in any religious ceremony or when sitting on a panchayat to determine any tribal question. 614 184

JIHU SUB-SEPT

They may not kill or eat the Jihu or babbler bird, nor may they wear a particular sort of garland known as Jihu Mala from the resemblance which it bears to the babbler's eggs. The Jihu is said to have guided the ancestor of the sept to water when he was dying of thirst in the forest. [825] [773]

SANKH SUB-SEPT

They may not wear shell necklace or ornaments and are forbidden to eat, carry, cut, or use shell.

JUGI SUB-SEPT

They smear their foreheads with vermilion at the harvest festival and go round asking alms of rice. With the rice thus collected they make cakes which they offer to the gods. 614 184 302 782

MANJHIKHIL SUB-SEPT

The members of this sub-sept are descended from the Manjhi (headman of a village) . e., their ancestor was a Manjhi. 614 184

NAIKEKHIL SUB-SEPT.

The members of this sub-sept claim descent from a village priest.

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

583
585

After that the boy has to pay sufficient money as fines to provide a feast for the whole village[1].

585
184
735

Tunki Dipil Bapla: This type of marriage is performed by poor men. As they have not sufficient money to bear the expenses of the regular marriage (Raibar Bapla) they resort to this type, in which the bride is brought to the house of the bridegroom with a small basket on her head, a few friends and relatives accompany her to her house. The bridegroom in the presence of these persons applies vermilion mark on her head and a feast is then arranged and the couple then live as husband and wife.

583
584

Irut Bapla: This is adopted by forward young men who are not quite sure whether the girl they fancy will accept them, and take this means of compelling her to marry. The man taking some vermilion on his fingers watches his opportunity at the fair or on any similar occasion, marks the girl he is in love with on the forehead and claims her as his wife. Doing this he runs away at full speed to escape from the thrashing he may expect at the hands of her relations if he is caught on the spot. In any case the girl's relatives will go to his village and will obtain from the headmen the permission to kill and eat three of the goats of the offender or of his father and a double bride-price must be paid for the girl. The marriage is however legal and if the girl still declines to live with the man, she must be divorced in full form and cannot again be married as a spinster.

[586]

[1]Uma Chowdhury—Marriage Customs of the Santals—Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology Vol. I No. 1 January, 1952 pp. 104-105.

[13]

41 Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

796 782 animals is eaten by the men. The only woman who gets a share is the wife of the priest. Drinking, dancing and singing are followed by young men and women of the village.

796 614 [184] **Jom Sim:** The *Jom Sim* is performed with many quaint ceremonies which differ somewhat for the different clans. That is why it is called clan festival. Mr. Culshaw recorded some stories from which it can be ascertained how it is connected with clan. "The 614 796 539 Karwak Hasdak tell the story of how long ago their ancestors were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and all the Hasdak were present. They had performed the sacrifices and everyone had been served with rice and meat, but some of the younger folk present felt that they had not been given enough to eat, so they killed a buffalo, or kada, became known as Karwar Hasdak". The Soren Santal relate "that in the very early days the ancestors of the Soren were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and some of the company began to prepare [177] the food and cook it. In imitation of Brahmin cooks they put on sacred threads and served all the people. From that time they became known as poita Soren".[1]

796 614 174 It is probably the oldest sacrifice the Santal have because it has more aboriginal features in it than any other sacrifice of theirs.

224 793 [221] [824] [211] **Dihri Hunting:** The *Dihri* hunting, which is the most important hunting of the Santals which takes place once a year in the month of Falgun (February and March). *Dihri*, their hunting priest carries a big branch of a *Sal* tree with leaves and goes to the market, where people

[1] W.J. Culshaw—Tribal heritage. 1949. pp. 74 and 78.

41 Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

797 sprang from this pair. Also they correlate *Maran Buru*
771 with 'Satan'. They believe that *Maran Buru* spoiled
177 the first human pair and revealed to them the secret of sexual intercourse, just like the Christian who believe that Satan is responsible for the downfall of the first pair, [796] Adam and Eve. The converted Santals observe the Christmas Day and Good Friday. Harvest Festivals are celebrated by decorating Churches and offering prayers.

795 **Effect on the Social Culture of the Santals due to alien**
797 **influence.** The social system of the Santal is communistic
177 in nature. In any festival, or ceremony the whole
[181] village takes part. This cohesion is now losing its
• [184] strength. For this, missionary activities are to a certain extent responsible. The Christian converts are being cut off from social intercourse. Sometime a christian family is put to great inconvenience. This is particularly [764] the case when a death occurs for the non-christians will have nothing whatever to do with the disposal of the dead body. The non-christian method of disposing the dead body is by cremation whereas the converted Santals practise burial and subsequent mourning and funeral ceremonies according to the Christian way. There is [582] no bar to marrying more than one wife in Santal tribal custom. But this practice is strictly prohibited among Christian Santals as Christian religion strictly prohibits *bigamy*. Cross cousin marriage, and marriage with non-Santals is not tolerated by the tribal Santals but among Christian Santals, these things are not prohibited.

[585] The marriage ceremony is held either in the Church or in the courtyards of the house of the bride's parents

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

The Santals have many things of value in their culture. There are many elements that are well worth preservation and which have a great deal to teach the so called civilized neighbours. 177

The Santals have a large number of folklores and folk songs which contain many new ideas and thoughts. Their art of recreation brings a balance in their life which is lamentably absent in the civilized neighbours. 588

The political organisation of the Santals is worth studying. Although they have neither studied any literature on this line nor they have any written constitution yet they are extremely disciplined people and are managing their tribal affairs in a highly democratic way. The communal life of the Santal is well organised, in which everything is shared even joy and sorrow of one is the joy and sorrow of the whole community. This virtue is lacking in the so called civilized society where life is individualistic and so we find more selfishness in civilized people. 66 62 184

The knowledge of herbs and medicines of the Santal medicine-men is highly developed. Rev. P.O. Bodding with the help of two qualified doctors, Mrs. Bodding M.B. & Ch.B. (Edin) and Dr. B.B. Bogh, collected a large number of plants and other stuff used by the Santal medicine-men. He published the names of the plants and other stuff, the list of prescriptions and veterinary medicines in the memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in two parts.[1] Rev. Bodding men- 278 756 757 278 757 278

1. P.O. Bodding—Studies in Santal Medicine and connected folklore—Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (Calcutta) Vol. X No. I p. 1-138 and No. II p. 133-426 (1927).

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
SANTAL PARGANAS

797 177 Further, most of Santals who actively seek the new folds, are either those who are feeling[1] from persecution of their fellow-men for irregularities like forbidden marriages etc. or those who are in dire economic distress, and who hope to gain employment and protection thereby. This creates an unhealthy [578] rivalry among the groups and upsets the balance of their tribal society. Though there is no formal outcasting or persecution of the converted tribals, there yet exists a strained atmosphere created by the elimination of the common platform of tribals activity. 797 177 578 184 Participation by converts in all ceremonials and rituals on marriage, birth, death etc. is not possible, and this is creating a separative tendency, tending the promotion of division among the group on economic, cultural and social levels. The tribal solidarity is broken and the group as a whole suffers from such fission.

1 [Erratum: this should read "fleeing." Cf. errata sheet, category 116, p. ix -- Analyst]

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

different kinds of rice fields are Bengali. Maize, a cereal that is important in their economy, has a borrowed name, but other lesser cereals retain their Santali names. In Bankura the Santals have lost the use of their own numerals beyond seven, though apparently these are known and commonly used elsewhere. Even so, in Bankura the Santal word for "twelve" is still used in phrases connected with the recital of tribal traditions, as in the phrase *gelbar paris*, meaning the "twelve clans". Iron has a Santali name, but other metals now in use, such as lead, copper and brass, have Bengali names. In addition to brass and earthenware utensils, the Santals make extensive use of the leaves of the *sal* tree (Santali *sarjom*), which they plait to form many varieties of plates, cups, pipes and cigarettes, and they possess a wide vocabulary to distinguish between the different kinds. Brass and earthen pots they buy from others.[1]

The difficulties of determining the extent of their borrowings in the field of religion may be illustrated by the fact that the language of spells and of prayers offered at the time of sacrificing contains a strong admixture of Hindi-Bengali words. This would seem to indicate that there have been many borrowings at this point; but it is also possible that the one who makes the prayers, wishing to put himself into a favourable relation with the spirits, uses a special vocabulary and so removes himself from the common run of his people when he is acting as a mediator between them and the spirit world. Many of the songs sung nowadays are composed in Bengali. There is a large stock of riddles, some of which are asked and answered in Santali, others of which are asked and answered in Bengali, while yet others make use of both languages.[2]

Only incidental reference has been made to the impact of Moslem culture on Santal life. Reminiscences occur of the period of Moslem rule, such as the following statement: "Concerning the *Turuk* (*Turuk*, or Turk, the name by which Santals refer to Moslems), it is said that they ruin our spirits because they cut the throats of fowls the wrong way. If we eat

[1] Another discussion of the linguistic evidence, giving many examples, and the whole stated from a somewhat different point of view, is to be found in Professor Sten Konow's introduction to Bodding's collection of Folk-Tales.

[2] In a suggestive article published in *Africa* for June 1946, Professor F. C. Bartlett has expanded his thesis in the Julian Huxley lecture of 1944 that each primitive culture displays both "hard" and "soft" points. The methods which he has outlined for determining, in the examination of any particular culture, what constitute the hard and soft points, and in particular the story method, may furnish valuable results when applied to the study of Santal culture.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

273 It would be a mistake to suggest that the attitude of the Santal towards intoxicants is one of simple approval. There are two standards at work. There is, on the one hand, the almost universal acceptance of the habit, reinforced by its sanction in mythology, the social function that it does fulfil and the fact that it is a form of food. There is also, on the other hand, a recognition somewhat grudgingly given to the undesirable consequences of the habit. It leads to a loss of working days, to [178] quarrels and offences against the moral code. Most informants agree that the drinking habit has increased in recent years. Such a statement must be regarded with the suspicion appropriate to all attempts to glorify the good old days. It does, however, imply the existence of a critical attitude. The earliest records, which indicate conditions a hundred years ago, all mention the drinking habits of the Santal as phenomenal. It is probable that the drinking of spirits in preference to beer has grown during the time when the Santals have been drawn more completely into a money economy, and it is certain that the Congress boycott in 1930 gave more than a temporary impetus to illicit distilling. Nevertheless, there is further evidence of [522] moral judgments being applied to drinking. The habitual [558] drunkard is a figure of fun and regarded with contempt. The drinking of rice beer does not lead to much intoxication except during festivals. A woman who drinks to excess is considered to be loose in other respects as well. People frequently complain that whereas formerly only the old men and women used to drink, now everyone does so. It would be easy, however, to overdo the picture of a Santal conscience in these matters, for they are a pleasure-loving people and drink is associated with their pleasures. The common attitude was well expressed by an old woman who had been asked to sing when she replied: "I cannot sing without beer."

221 The annual hunt takes place during the hot season. This 224 institution is still vigorous wherever there are Santals living within reach of a forest. Hunting is regarded as the character- [462] istic activity of the male. When the date of a hunt has to be [634] fixed, the responsibility for the arrangements and for making it known through the area rests with the *parganath*. The date may be fixed in different ways; each *pargana* follows its own 221 tradition. In three adjoining localities the following three 224 traditions are observed. In one the hunt is held always on the seventh day of the month of *Baisakh* (April-May). In the • 184 second it is held on the day of the full moon in the same month.

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

month. The date of the third is arranged while the first hunt is in progress, and it is announced by means of a *girę*. This is a method of reckoning dates or announcing future events. It may be used in connection with a hunt, but it is also used to announce a forthcoming marriage or a burial feast. It consists of a length of string in which a number of knots are tied, each knot representing one day. A number of *girę* are distributed to the surrounding villages during the weekly market, and they are kept by the headmen, who untie one of the knots each evening until one knot remains, when they know that the hunt takes place on the morrow.

Although the ritual meaning of the hunt has been obscured in the minds of the Santals, it is implicit in much that accompanies it. A hunt is the activity of the whole adult male population of the area. Women are not permitted to take part, but certain taboos must be observed by them while the men are away from home, to avert the lurking dangers of the forest. The prohibitions are similar to those enjoined on mourners and widows. No woman may wear flowers in her hair nor use the vermilion paint in the parting of her hair which is a sign of her married status. She should also leave off wearing the iron bangle which is another symbol of her marriage, and she must not bathe. At the present day, although the first two prohibitions are observed, there is some slackness about the others. But the main responsibility for placating the possibly malevolent influences residing in the forest rests with the *dihri*, or hunt priest. This is a special office, and the name is evidently the same as the Khond *dehuri* and the Ho *dihiri*, or priest. Among the Santals the *dihri* is a priest only at the time of the hunt, and he is appointed for the *pargana*. On the morning of the day when the hunt opens he performs the sacrifice of a brown hen on the edge of the forest which will be entered, and the tribal spirits are invoked to protect the men from wild beasts. He is encouraged by the spectators, who remind him that if any of them comes to harm they will hold him responsible. At times a certain amount of mimic hunting takes place in connection with the sacrifice, during which the *dihri* plays the part of the hunted animal.

The hunt lasts through the greater part of the day. The forest is surrounded by parties from different villages and the game gradually driven towards the centre. Within living memory the stock of game in most parts of the area has declined, and some of the hunts are now poorly attended for

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

the human race are also descended from the first pair, the prohibition against eating goose or duck flesh does not apply to the others. Some of the other clan names are either the same as that of the totem or are closely related to it. Mərndi is the name of a weed that is common in the rice fields; Soren is the name of the constellation Pleiades, though there appears to be no knowledge of a myth connecting the two; Ṭuḍu certainly suggests the sound made by drums; Hembrom suggests *hotrin* for deer; Kisku is not unlike *kikir*, a generic name for kingfishers; Baske is one of the words that mean "stale rice", and Murmu suggests *murum*, the buck of the traditions whose flesh the Murmu do not eat. On the other hand, it is not possible at this date to explain all the names by this type of association.

Tradition says that each of the twelve clans, or *paris*, are divided into twelve sub-clans, or *khût*. The myth about the Ṭuḍu refers to "all twelve kinds of Ṭuḍu". At the present day in the case of most of the clans there are in fact many more than twelve sub-clans. These sub-clans do not affect the rules governing marriage outside the clan. Some of the sub-clan names are found in more than one clan, and while it is unusual for the member of a sub-clan in one clan to marry a member of the corresponding sub-clan in another clan, there is no absolute barrier preventing such marriages. Inquiries made in the Santal Parganas[1] led to the tabulation of two hundred and seventy-seven different sub-clans distributed among the eleven known clans. Many of them are found under more than one clan. All those which are common to more than one clan are found also in the Bankura district, but some of the other names are unknown there, while others that are found in the Bankura district do not seem to appear farther north. Each of the sub-clans possesses a distinctive myth and also customs that differentiate it from the others, while the same is of course true of the clans. These customs affect life at many points. Apart from marriage, the taboos determine in some cases the type of ornaments which may be worn, the type of houses that may be built, and the kinds of food which must not be eaten. They are also linked with the worship of the spirits, for there are special clan and sub-clan sacrifices.

In each clan there is a division that is taken to have been the original sub-clan, the word *Nij* being prefixed to the clan name. Here, for example, is an account of the Nij Mərndi: "They are

[1] J. Gausdal, "The Khût System of the Santals", *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, 1944.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

they are touching the blue eggs of the *jihu* bird. The Hāsdāk' do not even touch a goose, and they will not take water from a tank in which geese or ducks are swimming at the time. Binu used to say that he had to perform four different sub-clan sacrifices. To two of the spirits pigs were sacrificed in the cowshed at the time of the *Sohrae*, to another spirit they sacrificed a goat in the house at the end of the *Sohrae*, and to the fourth they sacrificed a ram on the open land outside the village at the time of the Spring festival. The Kaṛwar Hāsdāk' tell the story of how long ago their ancestors were celebrating the *Jom Sim* festival and all the Hāsdāk' were present. They had performed the sacrifices and everyone had been served with rice and meat, but some of the younger folk present felt that they had not been given enough to eat, so they killed a buffalo and served that as well. The family of the one who slew the buffalo, or *kaḍa*, became known as Kaṛwar Hāsdāk'. They sacrifice a pig, a white hen and a brown hen at the time of the *Sohrae*; the rite is performed inside the house at sunset, and they must finish eating the flesh during the night, burying whatever is left over in the dung heap. The Hatibaṛi[1] Hāsdāk' sacrifice either a white hen or a ram to their sub-clan spirit. This should be done out in the open beside a white ant hill, but, like some others, they now bring a piece of earth from the ant hill into their cowshed. Like the Nij Maṛndi, of whom this is also true, they may not be vaccinated, but their womenfolk may be tattooed.

The Jihu Hāsdāk' are not allowed to brand their cattle. There seems little reason to doubt the fact that most of the clans use distinctive marks in branding their cattle. Bodding has affirmed of the *ḍhera dag*, or cross, that although it is used as a mark of ownership of cattle "it is not restricted to any sept or sub-sept".[2] (The word "clan" has been adopted in this book in preference to "sept".) In the Bankura district, however, many of the branding marks are definitely associated with the clans, and the marks correspond to those recorded by Charulal Mukherjea in Mayurbhanj.[3] The marks printed on the opposite page have been noticed in Bankura.

The Guṇ or Betel nut Hembrom constitute one of the most numerous of the Hembrom sub-clans. Of them it is said that "a few days after the ancestors had been divided into clans, one of the Hembrom was born at the foot of a betel nut tree. When he

[1] Literally "elephant house", but the name may refer to a locality.
[2] *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. II, p. 272.
[3] Charulal Mukherjea, *The Santals*, p. 77.

5t Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

grew to manhood he became a very important person and his sons were known as Guạ Hembrom. From that time they gave up the chewing of the betel nut. The women may wear any kind of *sari* and they may wear shell bracelets. They do not eat eels. It is said that their ancestors were great traders, and once upon a time when they were going on a trading expedition they were halted by a flooded river. At that an eel ferried them over the river on his back, and since then the Guạ Hembrom will not eat eels. They sacrifice pigs at the *Sohrae*, also one white and one brown hen." Another member of this sub-clan was able to throw further light on the origin of the name: "We are Guạ Hembrom, and this is how we got our name. During the first wanderings, one day while the ancestors were out in the forest a child was born at the roadside. They wondered what they could find to tie

614
173
[782]

Rot Mạrndi - //
Hembrom - +
Nij Murmu - ⊻
Ṭika Murmu - ||
Sidup' Soren - ≀

233
422
614

round the waist of the new-born child in place of the string. It was growing dark, so they quickly cut down the stem of a creeper, not knowing what it was, and bound it round his waist. Next morning they say that there was a betel nut on the end of the stem, and so the Guạ Hembrom began." The Nij Hembrom, like others already noted, perform their sub-clan sacrifices in the cowshed at the time of the *Sohrae*, with a piece of earth from a white-ant hill for the altar. It is set up in one of the corners. Another of their sacrifices is performed in the same month and has certain unusual features. No preparations may be made until after the sun has set and all the participants have already taken their usual evening meal, including the one who will perform the sacrifice. The rite is performed outside the village on a site that has been smoothed and plastered with cowdung. The person officiating draws a circle on the site with a paste made from flour and water. In it he first offers a red hen

614
173
614
782
[184]

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

and then a ram. The blood is placed in a vessel and fixed on the ground, surrounded with small stones. Only men may eat the meat of the animals sacrificed. The girls of this sub-clan are not allowed to wear Bengali-style *saṛis* or shell bracelets at the time of their marriage, though they may do so after they are married. When the men of this sub-clan are bringing brides to their home they present them with a *haṣli*, the neck ring, made of brass.

A whole range of the sub-clans is known as *Sada*, or "white". They may represent a reforming element, for their characteristic is a revolt against the use of red vermilion paint. When the first ancestors of the Sada Hembrom, so it is said, were going to perform a sacrifice they thought that they had with them all that they needed, but when they reached the spot where the sacrifice was to take place it was discovered that they had left behind their supply of *sindur*, the vermilion-coloured earth that plays a large part in the Santal cult. When they saw this they completed the sacrifice without the *sindur*, and since then their descendants have been known as Sada Hembrom and they have continued to observe the custom so carelessly begun! In other ways, too, they have abjured the use of vermilion. They make no use of it in the marriage ceremonial, though once their daughters are married and have become members of other clans they may put vermilion in the parting of their hair. The cloth which is a part of the presents given at the time of marriages must be white without any border, and their womenfolk are limited to plain cloth throughout life. The same pattern of behaviour applies to all the Sada sub-clans. The Sada Hāsdāk', along with some other sub-clans, when they perform their sub-clan sacrifices, first of all model a scorpion out of paste made from flour and water and offer it before going on to offer a hen, then a pig, and lastly a goat. This particular sub-clan has to eat all the flesh of the animals sacrificed and they are not allowed to throw any part of it away.

Some of the Murmu sub-clans are restricted in the type of dwelling-house that they may build. The majority of Santal house roofs are constructed on what is known in Bengal as the "charchala" plan. This consists of a thatch that slopes up from each of the four walls of the house. The main beam is set well above the four walls, being smaller than the length of the house, with four corner beams fixed two at each end of the main beam and going down to the four corners of the house to form the first stage of the framework on which the thatch rests. Most of the Murmu, however, have to build up the two end walls so that

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

the centre forms the apex of a triangle. The main beam rests on these walls with rafters sloping from it down to the other two walls. The resulting roof has only two thatches, sloping to the front and the back of the house respectively. The Gar or Fort Murmu are able to provide but little information about their origin, but they maintain their distinctive tradition in the matter of the sub-clan sacrifice. It is performed during the month October-November out in one of their own rice fields. The one sacrificing has to observe the customary abstinence of priests during the previous night, and the sacrifice takes place just after the sun has risen in the morning. A circle of flour paste is made on a spot levelled and cleaned for the purpose, and a larger circle of white stones is constructed round it. All who are going to partake of the flesh have to remain within this enclosure. First of all they sacrifice a black hen, which can be eaten by men only. Next they sacrifice a pig, the flesh of which may be eaten by the women as well. After this they sacrifice a white hen and finally a brown hen, and again it is only the men who may partake of these. The gathering and the attendant feasting last through the whole day, and they return to their houses at nightfall, leaving no food. They believe that some misfortune will fall on them if they have not finished eating while daylight lasts.

There is a sub-clan of the Ṭuḍu known as the Kāṛā or Blind Ṭuḍu which is accounted for in the following way: "The first Kāṛā Ṭuḍu placed a torn cloth behind the fireplace in his house. In the evening when his wife went to cook she found the cloth there and cooked the supper herbs wrapped up in it. Then the man who had put the cloth down came to look for it, and not seeing it behind the fireplace he asked his wife if she had seen it. 'Yes,' she replied, 'it must be the one in which I wrapped the supper herbs.' They raked out the fire and the ashes and saw that she had in fact burnt that cloth."

Many of the points that have been raised in this chapter cannot be understood apart from matters that are dealt with in subsequent chapters. The stories have been gathered together in this way in order to bring out the fact that in the clan system of the Santals and in the myths that form its background there is a key to the understanding of nearly everything that is distinctive in their way of life. The clan organization regulates their behaviour within the tribe and their dealings with the spirits. They accept its rule without question, and so long as they live in closely knit village communities this system, with its manifold implications, will continue to control their lives.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

793 practice of making an offering of his own blood is followed by
782 the magician[1] when he is attempting to cure sickness. While the function of the priest is to deal with the tribal spirits, it would seem that his co-priest has to propitiate relatively unknown and fearful spirits; one might almost describe him as a kind of "minister for foreign affairs" in relation to the spirit world.

778 Santal worship centres round its sacred places, the most
824 prominent of which is the *jaher*, the sacred grove usually to the west of the village. It consists of a number of tall, slim *sarjom* trees with perhaps one or two trees of other varieties, the whole having been left standing since the village was first founded. The surrounding forests have been cut down to form land for cultivation and for the homesteads, so the grove stands out
• [184] from the landscape. Apart from festival occasions there is usually little to show the sacredness of the place, but the
778 practice varies greatly from village to village. Two of the tallest
776 trees standing side by side are thought to be the abodes of
824 *Marañ Buru*, the national spirit of the Santals, and of his female consort *Jaher Budhi*, the Old Lady of the Sacred Grove. At the side of the former tree one sometimes discerns the blackened stones of the fireplace at which the village priest cooks — apart from the rest of the village—his share of the offerings. Other relics of festivals may be found, such as an ear of paddy still attached to its stalk, tied round one of the trees and left there since the time of the offering of first-fruits. Sometimes there are semi-permanent posts in the ground near the more sacred trees, two in front of the trees and two at the back, with cross-pieces joining them to form the framework on which a temporary thatch is placed during the festivals over the place where the sacrifices are performed. One of the trees is the abode of the "Five and Six", and near it a post standing in the ground represents the place of one *Laga Thākur*, who acts as their
[264] watchman. Removed to a little distance is the place where the food of the villagers is cooked: the meals eaten here are communal. There are other trees at which the *kudam naeke* makes his blood offering to the boundary spirits, and these are indicated during the festivals by means of a piece of string. In some villages one finds indications of places at the edge of the grove at which one or other of the sub-clans performs its sacrifices. In some groves the space at the foot of the principal trees is tended carefully as befits a shrine. The ground is cleared and plastered regularly with cowdung and water, a cactus hedge is planted to

[1] The *ojha*. See Chapter 8, pp. 94 ff.

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

58 852 been a second marriage, and as they were extremely poor their plea to set up house together had been allowed and the marriage celebration that had been postponed was indefinitely suspended. The time came when they wished to arrange a marriage for their eldest son and they found themselves involved in a difficulty. Until the formal celebration of their own marriage had taken place their son could not marry because in its absence they could not carry out the *caco chaṭiar* of their boy. The problem was solved by going through one of the permitted forms of marriage themselves, after which on the same day they performed the initiation of their three sons. They were scolded by the villagers who gathered for the occasion, but again pleaded their poverty.

852 574 The whole of the population of the village is invited for the ceremony, and each person must at the very least be given two cups of beer for each child on whose behalf the ceremony is being held. The feast for the whole village is not practicable except for a very few, and it is regarded as sufficient if the village officials are presented with a meal of rice and meat or chicken curry. If possible, the midwife who presided at the birth of the children bathes them in the courtyard by pouring water over them; and if she cannot, this is done by one of the old women present. [538] [624] Water is also sprinkled over the assembled guests. The *jog-māñjhi* recites the myth of Santal origins; beginning from the account of the creation of the world and the founding of the clans, he brings the story up to date by leading to the birth of the children in the particular family with which the villagers are at [535] that moment concerned. Then there follows a dance in the courtyard, and songs are sung in honour of the family. The event [533] is neither preceded nor followed by any period of instruction. • [184] Such materials as exist for comparing the institution in different parts of the Santal country suggest that possibly its observance is of greater importance in the north, particularly in the Santal 114 852 Parganas. Bodding has described the ceremony, basing his account on the published Santali account of the traditions.[1] Recently a long and full account of the ceremonial has been published in Santali, and this account comes from the same area but does not include a description of an actual observance.[2] On the other hand, Mr. C. L. Mukherjea's account of Santal culture to the extreme south in the state of Mayurbhanj[3] omits all

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 132]

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Santali Dictionary*, Vol. I, p. 443.
[2] Stephen H. Murmu, *Karam or Caco Chaṭiar*, Dumka, 1943.
[3] C. L. Mukherjea, *The Santals*, Calcutta, 1943.

St Culshaw M-S (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

CHAPTER 12

DEATH

761 152 It is far easier to describe the actions of the Santals in the face of death than to reduce their beliefs concerning death and the destiny of man's soul to any system. Under the stress of bereavement the behaviour of the men is stoical, in somewhat marked contrast to the behaviour of the majority of the peoples among whom they live. The women, however, give full vent to the expression of their grief and voice their lamentations in 764 words that are poetical in form and content. As soon as a death has occurred, preparations are made for the burning. Cremation is the almost universal rule, although there are certain 766 significant exceptions. Children who die before puberty are buried with little ceremony in shallow graves on the edge of the forest, and though thorns are placed over the grave to protect the body from wild animals, such graves are often disturbed. Men and women who have died from certain diseases are buried in the same manner, a fact that accounts for the often unsavoury condition of the patch of jungle that adjoins the compound of the Mission Hospital at Sarenga. This is particularly true of those [164] who die from tuberculosis, which is known to the Santals as *khok' ajar*, or "cough fever", and leprosy, which is called the "great disease". When deaths occur in the village from these causes or from some other infectious disease such as smallpox, the living avoid contact with the dead bodies as far as possible. The body of the dead person is fastened to a rude stretcher made with *sarjom* saplings, and the stretcher is then yoked to a pair of bulls which drag it out of the village. There the body is left after a token burial with a few handfuls of earth, and the task of corpse 764 disposal is left to the vultures and jackals. In some villages [184] burial is the custom because of the difficulty of obtaining sufficient firewood.

[624] In the usual course of events the *godet'* goes through the village calling on every house to contribute its share of the wood for the burning. From each house one of the men takes a stick for the burning to the bereaved home, while one of the women takes along a small amount of oil and turmeric for anointing the body, and, if the dead person be a married woman, some vermilion in addition. When all have gathered, the corpse is washed and rubbed all over with the oil and turmeric; in the case of a married woman fresh vermilion is put on her forehead and in

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42
[The Santal Christian Community]

794 this occasion they make use of *sarpa*, and the Christmas songs
796 that they sing are set to *Sohrae* tunes, as Christmas falls into the harvest season. During the afternoon of Christmas Day sports are held. These attract large numbers of spectators, and the final item in the sports, an archery contest, has become established as one of the events of the countryside. The interest and enthusiasm of spectators and competitors, who gather year after year to display their skill, is out of all proportion to the value of the prize that is offered. When the sports end the people disperse, the Christians to feast in their own homes.

Good Friday is observed with great solemnity, and the majority of the adults fast until after they have attended church. The services are very well attended, and on the initiative of the people themselves new forms of celebration are frequently being introduced. In most of the local churches the three-hour service has established itself in the customs of the people. On Good Friday in 1946 at the village of Barikul the people decided to follow the service by a silent procession through the village street. They filed behind a "standard bearer" who carried a rude cross fashioned from two *sarjom* saplings. At Easter it is customary for the dawn to be greeted by bands of young men singing in the village and also at the local Christian burial ground. The day is also characterized by large and enthusiastic gatherings of worshippers. Little has been done in this area to "baptize" the magico-religious practices connected with agriculture, and although Harvest Festivals are celebrated by the bringing of thank-offerings to church and the decoration of the church buildings, they have not become times of community rejoicing and remembrance as have the historic occasions associated with the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of the Saviour.

794 In the customs that surround life's crises one sees the blending
177 of old and new concepts and symbols. Pregnancy taboos are
178 widely observed, and steps have to be taken by Christians to
[843] remove the uncleanness resulting from birth. The practice of
[844] "churching" women was not introduced to the people at the
[883] beginning and it has never been put in the forefront, but the Christians carry out the bathing and naming and the feasting of neighbours. In this they are joined in many cases by non-Christian villagers, though no two Christian occasions are alike in
• [184] this respect. In some places most of the villagers gather, in other places all the women come, while at other villages only Christians collect. Something depends on the strength and persistence

St Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

APPENDIX A

SANTAL KINSHIP TERMS

601

THIS list of terms is added in the hope that it will assist in the comparative study of Indian kinship terms that may one day be undertaken. A list of terms current among the Santals of Mayurbhanj is found in *The Santals*, by Charulal Mukherjea, and reveals no significant differences. Many of the terms in use among the Santals are the same as those found among the Bengalis. [184]

(1) *Speaker's own Generation*

Brother	Boeha
Elder brother	Dada
Eldest brother	Maraṅ dada
Younger brother	Bokoṅ
Youngest brother	Huḍiṅ uṭaric' bokoṅ
Sister	Misera
Elder sister	Ajiṅ
Younger sister	Bokoṅ kuṛi
Mother's elder brother's daughter	Mamoṅ hopon era
Mother's younger brother's daughter	Mamoṅ hopon era
Father's elder brother's son	Gongoṅ hopon
Father's younger brother's son	Kakaṅ hopon
Father's elder sister's son	Hatomiṅ hopon
Father's younger sister's son	Hatomiṅ hopon
Mother's sister's son	Kaḳiṅ hopon
Mother's brother's son	Mamoṅ hopon
Husband's elder sister's husband	Ajnariṅ jàwàĕ
Husband's elder brother	Barhoṅhar
Husband's younger brother	Erweliṅ koṛa
Wife's elder sister's husband	Sadge
Husband's younger sister's husband	Erweliṅ koṛa jàwàĕ
(Man's) Elder sister's husband	Teṅaṅ
(Woman's) Elder sister's husband	Teṅaṅ
(Man's) Younger sister's husband	Bokoṅ kuṛi jàwàĕ
(Woman's) Younger sister's husband	Bokoṅ kuṛi jàwàĕ
Wife's younger brother	Erweliṅ koṛa
Wife's elder brother	Barhoṅhar
Husband	Jàwàĕ Herel